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Peter Quirk - Lockport Energy Center

Peter Quirk is the Plant Manager of the Lockport Energy Center (LEC) — owned by Fortistar Capital — north of Buffalo in western New York. Peter is proud of the important role played by Lockport and its exceptional staff in supplying energy to New York’s power grid. After leaving the Navy where he worked on nuclear power plants, he began working as a control room operator at LEC. From there he moved on to Operations Manager and most recently Plant Manager 18 months ago.

During a typical week, Peter works five 3 a.m. until 11 p.m., but there are many physical weeks. The plant requires lots of off-line maintenance and operation during which time Peter and his staff are working around the clock for 5-7 days at a stretch. There are also unusual events such as last summer when Peter was headed home from work and a severe lighting storm hit the region. He turned his truck around and drove through flooded roads back to find LEC completely black, having tripped off line. Peter and his team worked throughout the night to bring back LEC on line and help re-energize the grid. Likewise, Peter recalls how LEC was the first plant in the area—aside from the hydro facilities to come back on line following the 2003 blackout.

Peter recently returned to the University at Buffalo to further his training in environmental sciences. He says that most electric plant operators like LEC have a special appreciation for the environment. “We don’t just go to the letter of the law, we go to the spirit of the law,” he says.

As a plant manager, Peter takes great care in the safe and efficient operations of the plant. “You make a mistake, he says, “you have newampil, I’d prefer highlighting what you did wrong. As a result, when you are responsible for a power plant, the dream achievement is not to be wrong. As a result, when you are responsible for a power plant, the dream achievement is not to be noticed.”

Deidre Murphy – Entergy Nuclear Northeast

Deidre’s dedication to her craft ensures the employees and contract workers at Entergy’s Indian Point Energy Center receive the safety, operational and management training they need in order to keep the site running around the clock, all year-long.

By applying the latest principles and best industry practices to both classroom and on-the-job training, Deidre and her development staff design curricula that reflect the needs of a changing workforce. Whether it is re-certifying senior control room operators in state-of-the-art simulators, or tasking frontline managers with developing new management models in a classroom setting, nuclear plant employees rarely spend a moment without some form of training, pre-job instruction or safety reminders injected into their work-at-hand. That is why the nuclear power industry is second-to-none in industrial safety.

Experienced Entergy Nuclear executives — like Deidre — are frequently asked to speak at industry conferences, because of the company’s reputation for taking poor-performing nuclear plants and turning them into some of the best run plants in the nation. Deidre knows the safety of her co-workers, and the community at large, depend upon her dedication and commitment to her job. She takes her work seriously, and understands that her dedication and commitment to the safety of the United States as a Tech Sergeant in the National Guard is a big part of her life is seen only by her co-workers at Entergy Nuclear Northeast.

There are many ways to define Deidre Murphy. She is a wife, mother, friend, daughter, but a big part of her life is seen only by her co-workers at Entergy Nuclear Northeast.

Frank Valls de los Reyes – Brookfield Power

Frank Valls de los Reyes is one of three Brookfield Power traveling operators, responsible for the company’s Schoharie, Schaghticoke and Johnstown hydro generating-plants on the Mohawk and Hoosic Rivers, respectively. Having worked for Brookfield Power since 1999, his responsibilities include daily inspections of generating equipment, control and electrical systems, as well as security and public safety at these plants.

In the summer of 2004, Valls de los Reyes was one of several Brookfield Power employees instrumental in the rescue of two fishermen unable to escape the Cohoes Falls during a massive rainstorm. “When I saw they were stranded on a rock at the top of the falls, with a wall of water rushing over them, I called 911,” he said. “I contacted my supervisor and asked him to stop the water from rushing downstream from NYPN’s Cohoes Plant, also on the Mohawk.” Valls de los Reyes also helped rescue workers find an expedient route down to the falls, and several hours later, the two individuals were pulled to safety.

“I love what I do,” Valls de los Reyes said. “It is environmentally friendly, and there is a lot of history behind the renewable energy source,” said this Clifton Park resident. He also enjoys contributing to the security of the United States as a Tech Sergeant in the National Guard, where he serves as … what else … a power production specialist!

Lou Oster – Brooklyn Navy Yard

Lou Oster is the Senior Operating Engineer for the Brooklyn Navy Yard Corporation (BNYC), a job for which he has worked since the plants startup more than a decade ago. He began his career just out of high school as an apprentice with the operating engineers union some 18 years ago.

At his desk in the BNYC’s plant control room, Lou is surrounded by dozens of multi-colored lights and displays that help him monitor the plant’s many critical systems from fuel levels, to turbine and steam output, to who is entering and leaving the facility.

The 12-hour shifts worked by plant operators can be challenging to one’s personal life, says Lou, who recently became engaged. “Because we work on stream, we call it, ‘On for each other and it is not unusual to work long-weeks, holidays and unusual hours. There are also times that require everyone to be on hand,” he said. “When a stranger is knocked off their feet by a massive rain storm in the middle of the night, we need to be there to meet it and off-load the barge into the plant,” said Lou.

Lou takes great pride in knowing he has been helping to bring back this system which was down for the first time ever in its history. "When I saw they were stranded on a rock at the top of the falls, with a wall of water rushing over them, I called 911,” he said. “I contacted my supervisor and asked him to stop the water from rushing downstream from NYPN’s Cohoes Plant, also on the Mohawk.” Valls de los Reyes also helped rescue workers find an expedient route down to the falls, and several hours later, the two individuals were pulled to safety.

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Power Facts

New York State 2005 Generating Capacity by Fuel Type

- Nuclear 14%
- Coal 10%
- Oil & Gas 35%
- Hydro 15%
- Gas 15%

IPPNY Member contributions to New York State:

- Annual Taxes Paid $291,431,875
- Total Direct Employment 10,198
- Union Employment 4,986

IPPNY 1999-2005 Investment Record:

- Total Plant Investment $5,500,000,000
- Community Investment $30,735,000

Improvement in New York Generator Performance

The availability of generators during the summer months increased to 90.3% by the time versus 86.5% prior to energy industry restructuring and the NYISO operation. In addition, since the inception of the NYISO’s markets, the duration of nuclear unit maintenance outages has been greatly reduced, while their reliability has improved. The average capacity factor for nuclear units has increased from approximately 60 percent prior to 2000 to approximately 90 percent currently.

- NYS PSC Staff Report on the State of Competitive Energy Markets: Progress To Date and Future Opportunities – Page 16

Independent Power Producers of New York, Inc (IPPNY) is an Albany-based trade association representing the competitive power supply industry in New York State. IPPNY Members generate about 75 percent of New York’s electricity, using a wide variety of generating equipment including, hydro, nuclear, wind, coal, natural gas and gas turbines.