

Electric Utility industry group established a research fellowship at UCSD for work relating to advanced nuclear power plant concept

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An electric utility industry group representing half of the electric power generating capacity in the nation has established a research fellowship at the University of California, San Diego for work relating to an advanced nuclear power plant concept.

According to UCSD Chancellor, Dr. William McElroy, the fellowship grant is from High Temperature Reactor Development Associates, Inc. (HTRDA), an organization comprised of 53 electric utility companies with headquarters in Rochester, New York. The grant, to be administered through the UCSD Office of Graduate Studies, is for research on the gas turbine direct-cycle application of the High Temperature Gascooled Reactor (HTGR) nuclear power system.

Robert E. Ginna, President of LTRDA and retired Chairman of the Board of Rochester (New York) Gas and Electric Company, said the grant of some \$15,000 represents residual funds from an HTPDA program initiated 14 years ago to sponsor HTGR research and development.

"Since the very successful HTGR program has now reached commercial maturity, an advanced nuclear power concept for the future such as the HTGR-gas turbine system, with important environmental and economic advantages, is a most logical and commendable subject for the fellowship," Ginna said.

Ginna said Gulf General Atomic will assist in implementing the fellowship through coordination with its HTGR-gas turbine development program which is sponsored jointly by Gulf, the Atomic Energy Commission, and a number of utility companies. Included in the range of research, he said, will be materials behavior, component design and environmental aspects of the system.

A direct-cycle gas turbine power plant will eliminate the steam cycle now used in most thermal power plants. Instead, hot helium gas from the reactor core will drive a turbine generator directly. Because of the HTGR's high temperature operation, air can be used instead of water for power plant cooling - a significant advantage for both siting and environmental considerations.

Dr. McElroy said the university welcomes this opportunity to be involved in research basically related to an energy source with such beneficial attributes as the HTGR. This new fellowship demonstrates the University's determination to maintain a vigorous position on the frontiers of science and technology," he said.

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