



UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ SERVING THE CITIZENS OF IDAHO

LARRY CRAIG

[HTTP://CRAIG.SENATE.GOV/PRESS/](http://craig.senate.gov/press/)

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
July 11, 2008

Susan Irby (202) 224-8078
Will Hart (208) 342-7985

Nuclear Tour de France
by: Senator Larry Craig

Over the July 4th holiday week, I visited France, as a guest of its government, to tour the AREVA corporation's outstanding nuclear facilities which enable the French to provide 80 percent of their electricity through emission-free nuclear power. I also visited the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial to pay my respects to our fallen American soldiers from World War II.

In May, AREVA selected Bonneville County, Idaho, as the home of its newest \$2 billion uranium enrichment plant, the company's first in the United States. My tour of the French facilities included a visit to the construction site of the identical design enrichment plant that AREVA will build in Idaho. The Georges Besse II plant there is well along in its construction, and I was fascinated to preview what will be coming to Idaho Falls in 2011.

AREVA's Georges Besse II enrichment plant uses state-of-the-art technology that maximizes efficient use of power and water resources to operate the plant. It uses only two percent of the power required to power the previous generation of enrichment plants. Throughout the facility, AREVA incorporates only the most modern design features to ensure the highest degree of safety and reliability. In the construction of the plant floor, AREVA uses an innovative, floating concrete design that can absorb seismic shock from any potential earthquake activity. It serves to protect the plant's centrifuge technology and ensure over 30 years of continuous operation.

At each of the nuclear sites I visited, I was very impressed with the transparency and willingness of officials to engage in a frank dialogue with the public. This open, proactive approach serves the French well and is a product of its long and comfortable history with nuclear power. This attitude also was evident when I met with Anne Lauvergeon, AREVA's CEO. Our meeting marked the first time I had spoken with Madame Lauvergeon since she had given me the good news back in May that AREVA had selected Idaho for its new plant. She emphasized that Idaho had been chosen because of our State's strong public and political support for the enrichment project. She also was impressed with Idaho's enthusiastic response to AREVA's requirements for the plant.

[MORE]

Craig Page 2 – Nuclear Tour de France

The rest of my tour included a visit to the construction site of France's 59th nuclear power reactor in Flamanville, in the northern part of the country, and to AREVA's La Hague spent nuclear fuel recycling plant.

David Hill, the Idaho National Laboratory's (INL) Deputy Director, joined me on this trip to provide a unique U.S. and Idaho perspective on the nuclear plants we visited. As the lead nuclear energy laboratory for the nation, the INL plays a key role in the development of the next generation nuclear reactor technology and spent nuclear fuel management techniques. As we saw in France, there are many benefits to using such a comprehensive nuclear energy system focused on providing affordable, abundant, emission - free nuclear energy that is safe, secure, and a dependable domestic fuel supply to power the country.

I was impressed with my nuclear tour de France. Clearly the United States has a lot to learn from our French friends, and I am happy to report back to all of Idaho that we can look forward to a long-term and open relationship with our newest business partner – AREVA.