

Germany's oldest remaining nuclear plant shuts down

June 28 2015



In this May 27, 2015 file photo a catholic church is pictured next to the nuclear power plant in Grafenheinfeld, southern Germany. Bavaria's environment ministry said Sunday, June 28, 2015, Germany's oldest remaining nuclear reactor has been shut down, part of a move initiated four years ago to switch off all its nuclear plants by 2022. (Karl-Josef Hildenbrand/dpa via AP, File)

Germany's oldest remaining nuclear reactor has been shut down, part of a move initiated four years ago to switch off all its nuclear plants by the end of 2022.

The Grafenrheinfeld reactor in the southern state of Bavaria was taken offline as scheduled overnight, authorities and operator E.ON said Sunday.

Grafenrheinfeld went into service in 1981. It is the first reactor to close since Germany switched off the oldest eight of its 17 nuclear reactors in 2011, just after Japan's Fukushima nuclear plant disaster.

The next to close will be one of two reactors at the Gundremmingen plant in Bavaria, which is set to shut by the end of 2017. The rest will be closed by the end of 2022.

Environment Minister Barbara Hendricks said the Grafenrheinfeld shutdown is "a visible signal that the nuclear exit is moving forward."

"Every nuclear power station that goes offline reduces the so-called residual risk that is linked to the use of nuclear power plants and moves us a step forward in the reorganization of our energy supply," she said.



This April 23, 2015 file photo shows an aerial view of the nuclear power plant in Grafenheinfeld, southern Germany. Bavaria's environment ministry said Sunday, June 28, 2015, Germany's oldest remaining nuclear reactor has been shut down, part of a move initiated four years ago to switch off all its nuclear plants by 2022. (Rene Ruprecht/dpa via AP, File)

Germany aims to generate 80 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2050.

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