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## Report: Every U.S. nuclear plant has staff of workers checking eBay to buy old parts (AUDIO)

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Title: [Too Big to Fail](#)Source: [Fairewinds Energy Education](#)

Date: April 17, 2013

At 6:45 in

[Arnie Gundersen](#), [Fairewinds chief engineer](#): The average nuclear power plant has 6 guys on Ebay trying to buy old parts. And the reason for that is that if they put a new part in, and it isn't like the like replacement, they have to go to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and ask permission. So they literally have a staff at every nuclear power plant of people scouring Ebay, looking for old parts, so they can put those old parts in their warehouse. When one of their parts breaks they can replace in kind, as opposed going out and getting something better or newer.

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**33 comments to Report: Every U.S. nuclear plant has staff of workers checking eBay to buy old parts (AUDIO)****nobuggy**April 19, 2013 at 10:22 am [Log in to Reply](#)

It is difficult to believe that there is an adversarial relationship between the NRC and the nuke plant operators. It is far more likely that using Ebay costs less than buying 'something better or newer.' Corporations seek profits first.

I'm tired of Arnie's useless info...

[Report comment](#)**amberlight**April 19, 2013 at 11:44 am [Log in to Reply](#)

Your comment indicates that corporate profits are a legitimate excuse for compromising on quality. Maybe you didn't mean to say that, but that's precisely what you are implying.

Arnie is reporting what he knows. If he didn't, you would accuse him of concealing information.

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"...corporate profits are a legitimate excuse for compromising on quality."

Certainly in their minds. Thanks for making that clear, amberlight. That is exactly right.

Yes, Arnie walks a fine line.

[Report comment](#)**patb2009**April 19, 2013 at 10:33 am [Log in to Reply](#)

it's called managing conformance.

The plant is documented, and if you make changes, you have to change all the paperwork in the plant office, as well as at the manufacturer and at the NRC.

That way, say "Pump ACME- 1234" has a habit of failing, and it fails silently by breaking an internal shaft, so it isn't clear what the failure is. Well if the NRC issues a notice to replace all these, they know who to notify and how big of a problem it is.

Also if the old pump had Earthquake tie downs on the top and the new pump has earthquake tie downs on the side, somebody has to approve the change.

Look at the 787. Boeing worked a battery fix, took almost 6 months, and lots of paperwork.

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Or they can lie through their teeth like San Onofre did, come within inches of destroying the entirety of Southern California – millions and millions of people – and haven't received so much as a slap on the wrist. Nothing.

They all still have their jobs, and the NRC is in the process of allowing them to restart – with the same ILLEGAL equipment installed.

NRC – 'Not Really Caring' about the extinction of all life on this planet.

[Report comment](#)**AFTERSHOCK**April 19, 2013 at 2:44 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

thanks for elaborating on this issue patb2009. In the course of my daily business, I'm sometimes called upon to cross-referenced

obsoleted or unavailable parts that are used on our client's assemblies. This process requires the ability to decipher manufacturer's specifications, for client engineers. I seriously doubt that many NPP technicians are able to make such judgement calls. As such, I'm grateful the NRC had the sense to keep 'appliance' operators from using replacement parts that may not meet engineering specifications. Of course, you'd next have to wonder if these same dolts are capable of qualifying those 'used' replacement components!!!

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ftlt

[April 19, 2013 at 10:37 am](#) [Log in to Reply](#)

It common practice in military, some government and hospital work that "unlisted" equal to or better products are not allowed without a going through a stringent and time consuming process if allowed at all in the end... Sometimes, it does go to the absurd ...

I can only imagine the process at nuclear plants for introducing new materials... It is so important that these materials perform safely..

There is also a point where some materials have become archaic and impossible to locate too...

This is really speaking to a bureaucracy that is not working or is not allowed to work for many reasons... Most likely oversight cost saving reasons...

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weeman

[April 19, 2013 at 10:41 am](#) [Log in to Reply](#)

Who confirms that these parts are certified parts and not knockoffs, just look at the problem of knockoff parts in the airline industry, please tell me no substandard parts makes it into reactors, as if I don't know.

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ftlt

[April 19, 2013 at 11:53 am](#) [Log in to Reply](#)

It costs money to do so probably nobody does...

It is not always knockoff parts in general in all industry...

Propitiatory listing is a sales Specs game that played that can have lasting negative effects too

Some things as simple as – They are not made any longer...

You are stuck...

Just guessing here on the Nukes... I've seen it happen in other industries though...

I have often installed material in the past that no younger worker could (no experience and not familiar with the materials, the process, tools and machinery needed to complete task) It is not better material at all – just spec...

This was only because the "specs" had not been updated to common industry standards... No difference in quality... Just outdated.. It takes time and money to change spec...

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ftlt

[April 19, 2013 at 11:54 am](#) [Log in to Reply](#)

That is played

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thatmonk

April 19, 2013 at 11:02 am [Log in to Reply](#)

Finally, I something in common with the nuclear plant operators!

[Report comment](#)



Heart of the Rose

April 19, 2013 at 12:04 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

@ thatmonk..OH..+++...Me too..a great place to shop for cell phone parts..etc.

My suggestion to the nuclear plant workers...

Be sure and leave prompt and positive feedback.

eBay Song – Weird Al Yankovic Official Video

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aWU64N2mi5o>

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Heart of the Rose

April 19, 2013 at 12:04 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

Oh... GEEZE..lol.

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markww

April 19, 2013 at 11:17 am [Log in to Reply](#)

most parts may be counterfeit

markww

[Report comment](#)



amberlight

April 19, 2013 at 11:46 am [Log in to Reply](#)

Made in China from recycled DU materials...

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Time Is Short

April 19, 2013 at 12:58 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

That made my day, amberlight!

Unfortunately, probably true.

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pcjensen

April 19, 2013 at 2:19 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

and weak chinese metal. there tools are total crap.

[Report comment](#)



stock



April 19, 2013 at 2:35 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

Agreed, now the famous Klein tools are being made in China, and they are not equal.

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AFTERSHOCK

April 19, 2013 at 3:05 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

I shop all over the place to find anything-other than Made In China. If that fails, I'll buy used tools...

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KDM

April 20, 2013 at 1:46 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

(Klein) Say it isn't so?

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Atomfritz

April 20, 2013 at 3:43 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

And if the parts aren't counterfeit, their origin and previous use (and thus their quality and suitability) are still unknown. Even NOS stuff has many immanent problems.

Every vintage stuff aficionado knows the problem.

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WindorSolarPlease

April 19, 2013 at 12:03 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

I thought it would be against the law to sell Nuclear parts.

Not that I really want to know, but how would someone get these items to sell (just something to think about).

If it's that easy to get parts, could someone build a mini nuclear plant? Sounds dangerous to me.

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Time Is Short

April 19, 2013 at 1:00 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

Not hard at all:

'Man who built nuclear reactor in kitchen 'had it under control'

<http://crave.cnet.co.uk/gadgets/man-who-built-nuclear-reactor-in-kitchen-had-it-under-control-50004644/>

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WindorSolarPlease

April 19, 2013 at 7:08 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

Not too smart of that man. Thanks for the link, Time Is Short.

I thought I was a messy cook. Glad I don't have to clean up that mess.

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TheBigPicture



April 19, 2013 at 1:20 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

Like a vintage car, searching for parts, hoping to get lucky.

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PinkFlamingo

April 19, 2013 at 1:44 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

Another problem with nuclear parts is they weren't tested to be sure they are "nuclear-grade quality."

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) was cited in March for not testing thousands of parts.

6,200 shipments dating back to 1995 were not checked for nuclear-grade quality.

Some of these parts were installed/stored in Watts Bar, Sequoyah and Browns Ferry nuclear plants. (all of TVA's seven reactors at three nuclear plants)

<http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2013/mar/29/tva-cited-for-not-testing-nuclear-parts/?local>

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AFTERSHOCK

April 19, 2013 at 3:06 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

good post PinkFlamingo...

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PinkFlamingo

April 19, 2013 at 9:31 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

Oh no!

Look at this article...even the making of nuclear parts is beset with problems

"A Chicago Bridge & Iron facility building components for nuclear plants being built by Georgia Power and South Carolina Electric & Gas had a "chilled work environment" that prevented workers from raising safety concerns..."

"Workers at the facility believe managers retaliate against those raising safety concerns, NRC said."

<http://www.platts.com/RSSFeedDetailedNews/RSSFeed/ElectricPower/21967359>

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SNOWWY

April 19, 2013 at 11:09 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

this might sound strange to some people but energy should not generate any profits at all. every little bit should be invested into other methods of producing energy, not to fill the pockets of the few above. to measure success in profits is to play the game that tepco played among all the other corrupt businesses and politicians.

that game is their gain and our loss... to buy parts at ebay makes me wonder who sells parts, what are those parts exactly and was there not regulations on which suppliers are used when it comes to nuclear power?

i think the next big accident is waiting in the (burst) pipelines

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Cavebear

April 20, 2013 at 3:34 am [Log in to Reply](#)

Buying parts on ebay is understandable. Nobody wants to go through all the bureaucratic paperwork and all that. But installing 30 years old (and maybe used) parts surely doesn't improve safety.

Maybe OT but Germany had the biggest Green Energy producing day ever: Two days ago strong Winds and full Sunshine boosted the power output to the equivalent of twenty six (26) nuke power plants.

Time to shut the monsters down.

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Mike Mulligan

April 21, 2013 at 10:55 am [Log in to Reply](#)

Don't forget, it is big business in the nuclear industry to purchase "reverse engineer" contractor services... obsolete, stranded and no longer made parts stream...

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NeoVG

April 22, 2013 at 6:43 am [Log in to Reply](#)

It was also common practice for NASA to get a special revision of old Intel 8086 CPUs for their shuttle fleet: <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/05/12/technology/ebusiness/12NASA.html>

It's totally okay, as these old parts simply not produced anymore. You could go to some specialized dealer, but he would also buy the parts at Ebay.

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bwoodfield

April 22, 2013 at 4:28 pm [Log in to Reply](#)

Does no one else find it a concern that people are even able to purchase parts for a NPP off of Ebay?

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