

Note 1. Operable Nuclear Reactors. A reactor is defined as operable when it possesses a full-power license from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission or its predecessor, the Atomic Energy Commission, or equivalent permission to operate, at the end of the year or month shown. The definition includes units retaining full-power licenses during long, non-routine shutdowns that for a time rendered them unable to generate electricity.

Note 2. Nuclear Capacity. Nuclear generating units may have more than one type of net capacity rating, including the following:

(a) Net Summer Capacity—The steady hourly output that generating equipment is expected to supply to system load, exclusive of auxiliary power, as demonstrated by test at the time of summer peak demand. Auxiliary power of a typical nuclear power plant is about 5% of gross generation.

(b) Net Design Capacity or Net Design Electrical Rating (DER)—The nominal net electrical output of a unit, specified by the utility and used for plant design.

Through 2007, the monthly capacity factors are calculated as the monthly nuclear electricity net generation divided by the maximum possible nuclear electricity net generation for that month. The maximum possible nuclear electricity net generation is the number of hours in the month (assuming 24-hour days, with no adjustment for changes to or from Daylight Savings Time) multiplied by the net summer capacity of operable nuclear generating units at the end of the month. That fraction is then multiplied by 100 to obtain a percentage. Annual capacity factors are calculated as the annual nuclear electricity net generation divided by the annual maximum possible nuclear electricity net generation (the sum of the monthly values for maximum possible nuclear electricity net generation). For the methodology used to calculate capacity factors beginning in 2008, see U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Electric Power Monthly*, Appendix C notes on “Average Capacity Factors.”

Table 8.1 Sources

Total Operable Units and Net Summer Capacity of Operable Units

1957–1982: Compiled from various sources, primarily U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Nuclear Reactor Programs, “U.S. Central Station Nuclear Electric Generating Units: Significant Milestones.”

1983 forward: U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), Form EIA-860, “Annual Electric Generator Report,” and predecessor forms; Form EIA-860M, “Monthly Update to the Annual Electric Generator Report”; and monthly updates as appropriate. See <https://www.eia.gov/nuclear/generation/index.html> for a list of operable units.

Nuclear Electricity Net Generation and Nuclear Share of Electricity Net Generation

1957 forward: Table 7.2a.

Capacity Factor

1973–2007: Calculated by EIA using the method described above in Note 2.

2008 forward: EIA, Form EIA-860, “Annual Electric Generator Report”; Form EIA-860M, “Monthly Update to the Annual Electric Generator Report”; and Form EIA-923, “Power Plant Operations Report.”