
Nuclear plant operators payout amount revealed

NHK has learned that nuclear power plant operators in Japan have charged users about 90 million dollars a year to cover payouts to local authorities hosting their facilities.

NHK interviewed 9 power companies about their annual payments since 2008 to prefectures and municipalities hosting nuclear power plants.

The payments have been covered by utilities fees users pay to electric companies. But the details of just how much users are shouldering the cost of such payouts had not been revealed.

The survey has found the annual amount that Kansai Electric Power Company had been charging users to cover the cost was about 40 million dollar, with Tokyo Electric charging about 22 million dollars.

Kyushu Electric charged about 10 million dollars; Chugoku about 8 million; and Chubu about 4 million.

The central government last year said that it does not consider such donations as an expense, and that it will not allow utilities to charge users to cover them.

Following the government decision, Kansai and Tokyo Electric Companies removed the amounts from their calculations of electric fees last year. Other companies are considering following their suit.

Osaka University Professor Tatsuo Hatta says utilities may be able to find other ways for such payouts. He is calling for further transparency.

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