Duke brings in new transformer

THE JOURNAL STAFF

SENECA — Rochester Highway was blocked Sunday morning so Duke Energy's Oconee Nuclear Station could transport one of the largest step-up transformers in the United States to its site.

Duke spokesperson BJ Gatten said the new main step-up transformer, which will not be unveiled until the fall, will replace the original transformer for the Unit 2 reactor. The current reactor is 40 years old and was installed during the initial construction of the plant.

Duke officials have been tracking the transformer's location since it left its manufacturer in Spain. It recently arrived at the Savannah, Ga., port and was transported to the Newry Rail Site.

Gatten said the transformer weighs 816,000 pounds and was transported on a vehicle that moved, on average, 2 to 3 miles per hour — it took several hours for the transporter to reach Oconee Nuclear from the rail site.



SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

This step-up transformer, manufactured in Spain, will be unveiled at Oconee Nuclear Station in the upcoming months.

"The transformer is what steps up the voltage when power leaves the generators in order for electricity to go to our distribution lines," Gatten said. "It is one of two largest at the plant — Unit 3 has a different type of transformer."