

FOR THE JOURNAL

George Beam from AREVA, left, and Preston Gillespie, Oconee site vice president, accept the Engineering Project of the Year award.

Oconee Nuclear digital upgrade is top project

FOR THE JOURNAL

SENECA — Oconee Nuclear Station's digital upgrade was awarded Engineering Project of the Year during Platts' 13th annual Global Energy Awards earlier this month in New York City.

Platts is a leading global provider of energy, petrochemicals and metals information, and a premier source of benchmark price assessments for those commodity markets.

Duke Energy and AREVA Inc., a provider of low-carbon energy solutions for more than four decades, were jointly recognized for the development and installation of a digital reactor protection system and engineered safeguards system at Oconee.

"This award is a celebration and achievement of the project team at Oconee. Engineers, technicians and others worked very hard to make sure this system was installed, tested and operated as designed," said Oconee site Vice President Preston Gillespie.

The new system, designed by AREVA, replaces the original analogue system while protecting the integrity of the nuclear fuel, and incorporating enhancements into overall design, Gillespie said, adding that the visual, online monitoring and diagnostic capabilities can detect instrument inconsistencies earlier.

"As the first plant in the nation to be approved by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to add this new equipment, we are pleased to be recognized for this example of our commitment to continuous improvement. It is also recognition of our ongoing investment in Oconee's future as it continues to safely and reliably serve our customers," Gillespie added.

The installation on unit 1 was completed in the spring, and units 2 and 3 are scheduled for completion by 2013.