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global clean energy forum
 Is the world now ready for renewables?
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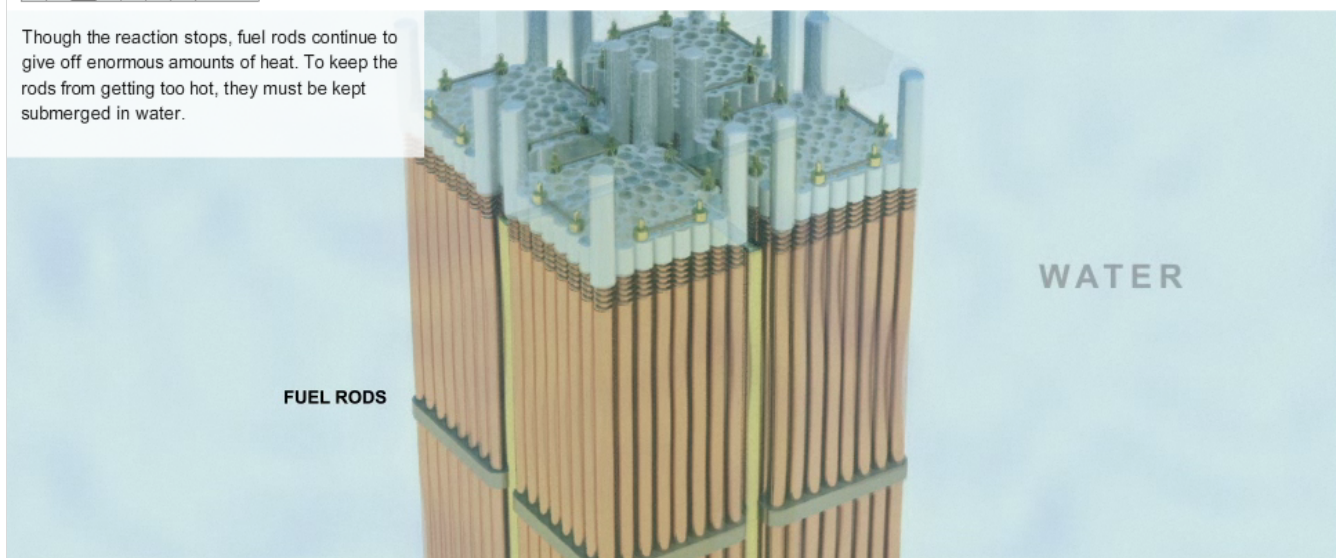
UPDATED March 24, 2011

How a Reactor Shuts Down and What Happens in a Meltdown

The operating reactors at Fukushima Daiichi power station automatically shut down during the earthquake. But after cooling failures, two of them went into partial meltdown.

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Though the reaction stops, fuel rods continue to give off enormous amounts of heat. To keep the rods from getting too hot, they must be kept submerged in water.



By XAQUÍN G.V., BILL MARSH, DYLAN McCLAIN and GRAHAM ROBERTS | Send Feedback

Sources: Nuclear Energy Institute; David A. Lochbaum, Union of Concerned Scientists; Margaret Harding, 4 Factor Consulting; Arnold Gunderson, Fairwinds Associates; International Atomic Energy Agency

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