

AREVA executive extols nuclear benefits to Alberta

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By MARKUS ERMISCH, Calgary Sun

Nuclear energy may be an inevitable source of power in Alberta as the province develops its oilsands and global demand for energy is rising.

"Nuclear is a complement now to fossil fuel, not a rival," Armand Laferrere, president of AREVA Canada, said yesterday during the Energy Roundtable at Calgary's Ranchman's Club.

"The province needs, I think, to diversity its power sources."

AREVA, a French-based developer of nuclear technology, is one of the companies vying to sign a deal with Bruce Power, a nuclear operator that seeks to build a reactor complex in Alberta or Saskatchewan.

Laferrer said the case for Alberta to delve into nuclear energy is convincing in that nuclear energy doesn't emit carbon.

He said the demand for energy is increasing in Alberta and Saskatchewan, making the region "one of the most promising markets for nuclear energy on this planet."

Much of that demand is driven by growth in oilsands developments around Fort McMurray.

Laferrere said the oilsands would consume three trillion cubic feet of natural gas by 2030 to fuel their energy needs, in the hypothetical case that natural gas were the region's sole energy source.

In little more than two decades, the oilsands would use up all of the natural gas produced in Alberta to power.