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Citizens Say Power Plant Pollution Reductions Long Overdue
New coal plant would undo the gains citizens deserve in clean air.
Cheaper, cleaner alternatives not being utilized by CPS

San Antonio, Tx. Today City Public Service (CPS) announced pollution reductions to be made at the existing Deely coal plant. CPS plans to submit a permit application to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for a 750 MW coal plant proposed for Calaveras Lake, the site of J.T. Deely and Spruce coal plants.

Karen Hadden, Executive Director of the Sustainable Energy and Economic Development (SEED) Coalition, responded that "The pollution reduction planned for Deely is good news, but this CPS cleanup is long overdue. Hadden noted, "San Antonio will finally get much-needed pollution reductions. Hopefully CPS will reconsider putting huge amounts of toxic emissions right back into the air by building another coal plant, especially when there are cheaper, cleaner alternatives "

"The Deely coal plant had over 6,000 opacity (soot) exceedances in less than three years' time. There should have been scrubbers on Deely 20 years ago, and now it appears that CPS is making promises in order to get an additional plant built," Hadden continued.

"There are cleaner and cheaper alternatives to a new plant and CPS hasn't even been studied them yet," noted Joleen Garcia of the Esperanza Environmental Justice Project. "San Antonio might not even need a new billion-dollar coal plant if energy efficiency was aggressively pursued."

According to CPS' web site, the utility has over 500,000 ratepayers. Using this number, a new billion-dollar plant would cost \$2000/ratepayer for construction alone, and there would be approximately \$250/ratepayer/ year in costs for coal as well, money that could better be spent in other ways.

"Why does CPS call their proposed billion-dollar coal plant a bargain, when it's at least 4 times more expensive than effective energy efficiency programs would be?" asked Garcia. "It's possible that no plant would even be needed with a strong program to provide rebates and loans for efficient air conditioning and ductwork, weatherization and insulation. This has worked in other cities. Austin avoided building a 500 MW plant this way, and now homes have lower utility bills and the air is

cleaner as a result. San Antonio is a bigger city, with more ground to gain in efficiency,” she continued.

Another option would be to purchase some of the 1000 MW of wind energy that is now available, especially now that the state legislature has cleared the path for construction of additional lines to transmit power from West Texas locations.

Robert Dawson of the San Antonio Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice stated that “People are suffering as a result of the air pollution from the coal plants. San Antonio may not meet the state’s health based air quality standards, so it’s about time for CPS to clean up Dirty Deely. They shouldn’t put pollution right back into the air with another coal plant, and CPS wants to build it in the same part of town, where the community is already heavily impacted by pollution.” Dawson also noted that “Power plant pollution from Calaveras Lake gets blown across town, and isn’t good for the health of anyone in San Antonio.” According to Death, Disease and Dirty Power, an Abt study that was reviewed by the Harvard School of Public Health, power plant pollution is to blame for 93 premature deaths per year in the San Antonio region. The pollution also leads to asthma attacks, sending sufferers to emergency rooms and sometimes resulting in hospitalizations.

Data taken from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality 2000 Emission Inventory Database shows that existing Calaveras Lake plants emit:

◆ **More criteria air pollutants than all other Bexar-Guadalupe-Comal-Wilson county point sources combined, with:**

- *62% of the 64,406 tons for the San Antonio region in 2000 – CPS has 40,232 tons
- *48 other point sources together emitted 24,174 tons

- ◆ 90% of the SO₂ for the region – 23,255 tons of the 25,828 tons of SO₂ for the region
There are potential public health effects from five-minute sulfur dioxide spikes at ground level from large SO₂ emissions.
- ◆ 52% (13,912 tons) of the 26,767 tons of NO_x in the San Antonio region- much of it from Deely.

The Deely/Sommers/Spruce complex ranked #1 among the 49 industrial plants in 2000 in the four county San Antonio region for:

- *nitrogen oxides (NO_x)
- *sulfur dioxide (SO₂)
- *PM 10 – particulate matter
- *VOC’s – Volatile organic compounds and
- *Carbon monoxide – CO

More information about the existing plants and proposed coal plant is available at www.seedcoalition.org – in a Spotlight on San Antonio section.

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