

Clean Wisconsin

(Founded as Wisconsin's Environmental Decade)

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Clean Wisconsin and Citizens Utility Board Oppose WPL's Dirty Coal Plant Proposal

Madison, WI--Clean Wisconsin and the Citizens' Utility Board condemn Wisconsin Power and Light Company's (WPL) recently announced plan to build a 300 megawatt coal-burning power plant in Cassville, Wisconsin - beside the Mississippi River. The company announced today that it would seek approval to expand its existing coal-fired Nelson Dewey facility, which was built in 1959.

"Wisconsin already depends on dirty coal for over 70% of its electricity," said Katie Nekola, energy program director for Clean Wisconsin, "and in the past four years, the Public Service Commission has approved plans to add 1,700 more megawatts of old-technology coal generation. We need to get serious about using clean energy solutions that don't contribute to global warming, such as energy efficiency, renewables, and state-of-the-art coal gasification to meet our electricity needs in this state."

Wisconsin's aging fleet of coal-burning power plants is responsible for thousands of tons of smog and soot-causing sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, and fine particle emissions, which worsen air quality and create breathing problems, especially for children and those with asthma and other respiratory illnesses. New coal plants, while somewhat less polluting than older units, still emit unacceptable levels of air pollutants, including mercury, a potent neurotoxin that has contaminated all of Wisconsin's water bodies.

"Any baseload plant that WPL builds will operate for half a century, so we have to insure that it's designed to protect the environment and protect ratepayers from the impacts of future carbon taxes," said Charlie Higley, executive director of the Citizens' Utility Board. "WPL's proposed plant won't meet these critical tests."

"It's time to abandon this outmoded technology and make a commitment to cleaner, healthier ways to generate electricity," said Nekola. "Wisconsin's policymakers and citizens need to demand that WPL use proven power plant technologies that don't contribute to global warming and toxic emissions."

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Clean Wisconsin, an environmental advocacy organization, protects Wisconsin's clean water and air and advocates for clean energy by being an effective voice in the state legislature and by holding elected officials and corporations accountable. Founded in 1970 as Wisconsin's Environmental Decade, Clean Wisconsin exposes corporate polluters, makes sure existing environmental laws are enforced, and educates citizens and businesses. Phone: 608-251-7020, Fax: 608-251-1655, Email: info@cleanwisconsin.org, Website: www.cleanwisconsin.org.