

Press Release

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Electric Coop Members urged to Unplug Deal to Buy Dirty Coal Power

(Austin) Brazos Electric Coop announced today that it plans to buy nearly 40% or 375 MW of the electricity produced the proposed Sandy Creek coal plant near Waco, Texas. The proposed Sandy Creek coal plant would produce about 900 mw of electricity from Wyoming coal.

Neighbors and environmentalists urged members of the 16 Coops that buy power from Brazos to pull the plug on the deal. They say that the air pollution from this plant would affect Texans all the way up the Brazos Valley and add to the pollution in Dallas- Ft Worth.

"This plant will release thousands of tons of pollutants that cause smog, acid rain and global warming, and particles that cause breathing difficulties. It would release toxic mercury, which can lead to contamination of fish, putting children at risk for learning disabilities and brain damage," said Ricky Bates co-chair of T-Power (a group of citizens who live nearby the plant and oppose its construction). "The plant may be permitted but appeals have been filed on the air and water permits that may keep the plant from ever being constructed."

Robert Cervenka, a local rancher, and co-chair of T Power said, "We are in an area that already suffers from air pollution, not just from nearby gas plants but from Alcoa near Rockdale. It's not just people here who will be affected. The coal plant would produce pollution that would impact Waco and Dallas/Ft. Worth. The site has many problems, including the runoff that goes into nearby streams, lakes and the Brazos River. We don't need this plant. Texas has 30% more power than we need, even on the hottest days."

According to their press release:

Brazos Sandy Creek Electric Cooperative, Inc. owns 25 percent of the proposed facility's output through an undivided ownership interest. Brazos Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. has contracted to purchase 150 megawatts of the proposed facility's output from Sandy Creek Energy Associates, L.P. for an initial 30-year period. The purchase contract provides for a pass-through of commodity fuel, transportation and emissions expenses.

This total is 375 MW

"Co-op customers are getting a raw deal. Under the terms of this contract they will bear all the risk of fuel and rail cost increases and will have to pay for any carbon tax or fee that might be imposed. Carbon costs could add as much as 50% to the price of coal powered electricity making coal more costly than other alternatives," said Tom "Smitty" Smith of Public Citizen's Texas office. "Co-op

