



February 28, 2009

**Marshalltown Coal Plant Draft Air Permit
Fact Sheet & Talking Points**

Thank you very much for taking the time to write to the Iowa DNR to express your concern about the proposed coal plant. The most important thing is that you take the time to write a letter. Your letter need not be perfect.

To maximize the effectiveness of your letter:

- Send the letter directly to the Iowa DNR. The Iowa DNR is required to respond to each individual letter it receives.
- Write the letter in your own words. The Iowa DNR has to take the time to respond to each individual argument it receives.
- Ask the Iowa DNR to take action – to deny the permit, to postpone issuing the permit, and/or to impose a more stringent requirement in the permit.
- Include one or more of the arguments below in your letter.
- Encourage your friends to write letters to the Iowa DNR.

Addresses:

Please direct all comments to Christopher Roling at the Iowa DNR. You may send a letter or an email. If you'd like to send a copy to DNR Director Rich Leopold, his information is below as well.

Mail: Christopher A. Roling, PE
Air Quality Bureau
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
7900 Hickman Rd, Suite 1
Urbandale, IA 50322

E-Mail: chris.roling@dnr.iowa.gov

cc: Mr. Richard Leopold, Director
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Henry Wallace State Office Building
502 East 9th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319

E-Mail: richard.leopold@dnr.state.ia.us

Background

In November 2007, Interstate Power & Light/Alliant Energy applied for an air quality permit from the Iowa DNR for its proposed 649 megawatt (MW) coal plant in Marshalltown, Iowa. If built, the plant would be among the largest single sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Iowa and would emit a variety of other pollutants. The DNR has issued a draft air quality permit that does not sufficiently protect Iowa's air quality or public health. Below are brief descriptions of main issues with the permit and arguments that can be made about these shortcomings that you may use in a public comment letter to the DNR.

I. Fine Particulate Matter Emissions

Fine particulate matter can increase asthma, bronchitis, and heart attack rates for all people exposed. The elderly, young children and folks with respiratory problems and diabetes are most susceptible. There is no fine particulate matter monitor in Marshalltown. Furthermore, Alliant has not been required to model (estimate) the impacts of the proposed coal plant on fine particulate matter concentrations in Marshalltown.

Tell the DNR: The state has insufficient information about the *current* fine particulate matter concentrations in Marshalltown. Before permitting the coal plant to be built, the Iowa DNR should require the utility to model (estimate) the expected impacts of the proposed plant on fine particulate matter concentrations in Marshalltown and Eastern Iowa. If the utility is unable or unwilling to model impacts, before permitting the coal plant to be built, the Iowa DNR should install a fine particulate matter monitor in Marshalltown and measure current fine particulate matter concentrations to determine if the new coal plant will cause fine particulate matter to rise above safe levels as determined by the EPA.

II. Lead Emissions

EPA scientists recently discovered that even low lead levels harm the neurological development of children. In response, the EPA recently lowered the Clean Air Act lead standard from 1.5 micrograms per cubic meter to 0.15 micrograms per cubic meter. The Iowa DNR has not been monitoring lead levels in Marshalltown or anywhere in Iowa.

Tell the DNR: Given new information about the health threats posed by lead and the fact that the proposed coal plant will emit a significant amount of lead, the Iowa DNR should monitor lead levels in Marshalltown before issuing the permit, to determine if a new coal plant would cause unsafe levels of lead.

III. Mercury Emissions

Mercury emissions from coal plants can cause the mercury content of fish in local lakes and streams to increase. Persons who eat significant amounts of local fish may be impacted by mercury emissions. The proposed DNR permit requires mercury-reducing technology. However, it is not sufficient to meet the Clean Air Standards required to protect the public health.

Tell the DNR: The coal plant should be required to adopt technology that further reduces mercury emissions in order to protect public health.

IV. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Iowa already generates most of its electricity via coal combustion. Coal-fired power plants emit almost 40% of the United States' annual carbon dioxide emissions, making them a major contributor to global warming. In Iowa, the top ten emitters of greenhouse gases are 10 coal plants. Allowing this coal plant to be built without limiting carbon dioxide emissions would continue this unsustainable trend.

Tell the DNR: Deny the coal plant permit because the coal plant will emit too much carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas which causes global warming. At the very least, the Iowa DNR should impose limits on the amount of carbon dioxide the coal plant will emit. The draft permit allows the proposed coal plant to emit unlimited amounts of carbon dioxide. To identify appropriate limits, the DNR should examine the "best available control technology" for carbon dioxide