

AMP-Ohio proposes to build a fifth coal-fired power plant on the Ohio River in area heavily burdened by pollution from four coal plants

AMP-Ohio has proposed to build a new 1000 megawatt coal-fired power plant to be located in Letart Falls, Ohio on the Ohio River.

This would be the fifth coal-fired power plant to be located within an 11.5 mile radius.

J.M. Gavin (American Electric Power)

Cheshire, Ohio

2600 MW

Started operations in 1974/75

Kyger Creek (Ohio Valley Electric Corporation)

Cheshire, Ohio

1085 MW

Started operations in 1955

Philip Sporn (American Electric Power)

New Haven, WV

1050 MW

First unit online 1950

Mountaineer (American Electric Power)

New Haven, WV

1300 MW

Started operations in 1980

In 2007 alone, the four existing coal-fired power plants released a combined 250,463,000 pounds of sulfur dioxide and 128,860,400 pounds of nitrogen oxide.

These releases were actually less than the 2006 emissions, because a scrubber was installed on the Mountaineer plant located in New Haven, WV directly across the Ohio River from Racine, Ohio in January 2007. The scrubber reduced sulfur dioxide emissions at that facility by nearly 94% alone (61,257,400 fewer pounds.)

Two states, two USEPA regions, but only one set of lungs

Part of the historical difficulty in tracking the amount of air pollution from the existing four coal-fired power plants is that two of the plants are located in Ohio, and two in West Virginia. You can tell by looking at the charts that the Ohio EPA tracks different pollutants than West Virginia DEP.

Additionally, Ohio and West Virginia are located within two different USEPA regions. The two Ohio plants, JM Gavin and Kyger Creek are located within USEPA Region 5, which serves Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin and 35 Tribes. The proposed AMP-Ohio plant would be located within USEPA Region 5.

The two West Virginia power plants, Mountaineer and Philip Sporn are located within USEPA Region 3, which serves Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

All are located within an 11.5 mile radius and on the Ohio River.

But the lungs of those who breathe in the vicinity of these plants do not differentiate between what state or USEPA region is in charge of regulating the pollution load from these facilities.

Racine Ohio: Already heavily burdened by air pollution

One of the locations already affected by air pollution from all four existing coal-fired power plants is Racine, Ohio. Racine is located on the Ohio River in Meigs County. Southern Elementary School, located at 906 Elm St. and Southern High School located at 920 Elm St. in Racine are located within this 11.5 mile radius.

The town of Racine, Ohio is located in the prevailing wind direction, northeast, from the existing coal plants. The proposed AMP-Ohio coal plant, located south and a little east of the community of Racine, would add significant air emissions to an already heavily burdened community.

Southern Elementary and High Schools

Distance from coal-fired power plant stacks

Philip Sporn	.860 miles
Mountaineer	1.59 miles
Kyger Creek	11.46 miles
JM Gavin	11.50 miles
Proposed AMP plant	5.22 miles

Coal-fired plants harm public health

Coal plants are a dirty business. **AMP-Ohio admits the proposed plant would release 36,410,400 pounds of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, particle pollution and carbon monoxide combined each year.** Additional emissions include carbon dioxide (14.6 billion pounds); as well as volatile organic compounds, lead, and mercury. (Source: AMP-Ohio permit to Ohio EPA.)

The pollution from coal plants can cause significant health problems. Peak levels of sulfur dioxide in the air can cause temporary breathing difficulty for people with asthma. Longer-term exposures to high levels cause respiratory illness and aggravate existing heart disease. Fine particles can penetrate deeply into the lungs and decrease lung function, aggravate asthma, assist in the development of chronic bronchitis, cause irregular heartbeat, nonfatal heart attacks, and premature death in people with heart or lung disease. Nitrogen oxides react with other substances in the air (such as sulfur dioxide and particle pollution among others) to cause respiratory and other adverse health effects. Mercury can cause severe neurological and developmental injuries to humans, especially infants and children.

Nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide also help cause acid rain, which may be carried hundreds of miles by the wind, far from the original source. (Source: USEPA)

In the American Cancer Society report entitled "Ohio Cancer Facts and Figures 2008" **Meigs County is listed as having the highest average annual number of lung and bronchus cancer age-adjusted mortality rates for both men only, as well as the total population.**

The entire American Cancer Society report is here.

<http://www.cancer.org/downloads/COM/OhioFF2008.pdf>

The corresponding charts which are the source for the information above are on pages 19 and 21. The entire report and all of its charts are broken down county by county and by gender.

AMP-Ohio stated in a January 8, 2009 press release, "The project remains contingent upon receipt of final permits and successful negotiations of state and local incentives." The major air pollution permit for the plant has been challenged by several national environmental organizations, with hearings scheduled for August 2009.