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# STATE CAPITOL REPORT

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## Environmental Integrity Project Report Finds That the Nation's Power Plant Emissions of Carbon Dioxide Rose Three Per Cent in 2007

### Biggest One-Year Jump in a Decade; Texas' Emissions Increased the Most

Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from U.S. power plants climbed 2.9 percent in 2007, the biggest single-year increase since 1998, according to a new analysis by the nonprofit and nonpartisan Environmental Integrity Project (EIP) that is based on data from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). **The electric power industry's carbon dioxide emissions constitute the single largest factor in U.S. climate change pollution, and those emissions have risen 5.9 percent since 2002 and 11.7 percent since 1997.**

	<u>CO2 Tons</u>		<u>1 Year Increase</u>	
	<u>State</u>	<u>in 2007</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>2006 to 2007</u>
1	TX	261,798,527.5	TX	5,684,471.7
2	OH	138,567,562.7	GA	5,495,970.9
3	FL	134,511,485.7	AZ	5,020,246.8
4	IN	132,366,691.4	CA	4,669,688.1
5	PA	123,583,664.4	PA	4,390,159.6
6	IL	109,014,967.8	MI	4,098,832.2
7	KY	101,784,836.0	IA	4,050,591.8
8	GA	100,759,060.8	IL	3,890,271.2
9	AL	94,803,674.3	VA	3,778,610.8
10	WV	90,866,457.0	NC	3,671,476.0

**The new EIP report shows that the 10 states with the biggest one-year increases in CO<sub>2</sub> pollution are: Texas, Georgia, Arizona, California, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Iowa, Illinois, Virginia and North Carolina. According to the EIP analysis, Texas, Georgia and Arizona had the biggest CO<sub>2</sub> pollution**

**increases on a one-, five- and 10-year basis.**

Data from 2006 show that the 10 states that emitted the most CO<sub>2</sub> per megawatt-hour of electricity produced (meaning the least efficient power production relative to resulting climate-related pollution) are as follows: North Dakota,

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Wyoming, Kentucky, Indiana, Utah, West Virginia, New Mexico, Colorado, Missouri, and Iowa.

## Coal Plants and Carbon Emissions

The EIP report provides context for the ongoing battles over proposed new coal plants. The report notes: **“The data make clear why national environmental groups have expended so much effort trying to stop the construction of a new batch of conventional coal-fired power plants, which would make a bad situation worse.** For example, the eight planned coal-fired plants that TXU withdrew in the face of determined opposition in Texas would have added an estimated 64 million tons of CO2 to the atmosphere, increasing emissions from power plants in that state by 24 percent.

**“But some of the rise in CO2 emissions comes from existing coal fired power plants, either because these plants are operating at increasingly higher capacities, or because these aging plants require more heat to generate electricity... [M]any coal-fired power plants are churning out more CO2 than they did in years past. For example, all of the top 10 highest emitting plants in the nation, either held steady or increased CO2 output from 2006 to 2007. Georgia Power’s Scherer plant – the highest emitting plant in the nation, emitted 27.2 million tons of CO2 in 2007, up roughly 2 million tons since 2006. Some coal-**

fired plants date back fifty years or more, and carbon reduction strategies will need to include ways to permanently retire these plants.”

## Making an Already Dire Situation Worse

Commenting on the report, Eric Schaeffer, director, Environmental Integrity Project, Washington, D.C. said: “The current debate over global warming policy tends to focus on long-term goals, like how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent over the next fifty years. But while we debate, CO2 emissions from power plants keep rising, making an already dire situation worse. Because CO2 has an atmospheric lifetime of between 50 and 200 years, today’s emissions could cause global warming for up to two centuries to come.”

## Moving to Smart Energy Solutions

**Sierra Club representatives Ken Kramer and Mark Kresowik participated in the press conference on March 18 at which the EIP report was released.** Attorneys for EIP are representing the Sierra Club in several court cases and/or other legal actions against existing and proposed coal-fired power plants.

Kramer, Director of the Lone Star chapter of the Sierra Club made the following statement at the press conference:

**“The bad news is that Texas is #1 in carbon emissions among the 50 states, and our emissions have grown in recent**

*see CO2 page 5*

# TCEQ Releases Draft License for Radioactive Byproduct Waste

## Sierra Club: TCEQ E.D. is Ignoring the Public and the Law

The Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club this week criticized the preliminary decision by the Executive Director of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to release a revised draft license to Waste Control Specialists LLC (WCS) to dispose of radioactive byproduct materials in Andrews County on the Texas-New Mexico border and to deny a request by residents of nearby Eunice, New Mexico to hold a public meeting on the application.

“We – and multiple residents of Eunice, New Mexico – maintain that the applicant has not met the basic requirements of Texas law to prove that the geology and hydrology of the site will keep this highly radioactive uranium and thorium waste away from residents’ lungs, groundwater, crops and livestock,” noted Cyrus Reed, Conservation Director of the Lone Star Chapter. “Without further study demonstrating that high winds, flash floods, fissures and unspecified saturation zones will not cause off-site contamination, the license should not be granted.”

Reed said Eunice residents were shocked when told by the TCEQ in its response to comments that “there was not a significant degree of public interest in the application and decided against conducting a public meeting.”

“Apparently, the fact that multiple residents of Eunice, New Mexico who are a few miles

from the site asked for a public meeting to discuss and make their concerns known does not hold water for the TCEQ Executive Director,” Reed said. “They are much closer and more susceptible to traffic accidents or off-site contamination than the residents of the City of Andrews, which is 30 miles away.”

## Contested Case Decision Yet to be Made

Sierra Club noted that the Executive Director has yet to act on the request by the Sierra Club and some residents of Eunice for a contested case hearing on the proposed license before the State Office of Administrative Hearings, and that the requests for a contested case hearing and the license itself must still be approved by the Commissioners.

“We hope the Commissioners will listen to their own staff – which found multiple problems and contradictions in the application – and send the application back to the drawing board, or give the Sierra Club and the concerned residents of Eunice, New Mexico the chance to prove that neither the applicant nor the TCEQ is following Texas’s laws to safely dispose of radioactive materials.”

**CO<sub>2</sub>**, *continued from page 2*

years. The good news is that Texas has the potential to play a major role in addressing global warming if we embrace smart energy solutions such as energy efficiency and renewable energy, solutions which pose tremendous economic as well as environmental benefits. The dramatic expansion of the wind power industry in Texas is a case in point. To become a true leader in clean energy, however, Texas needs to reject the new proposed coal plants that would spew even greater carbon emissions into the atmosphere, and the state must take steps to reduce emissions from existing coal plants.”

Mark Kresowik, Iowa organizer for the Sierra Club’s National Coal Campaign noted that: “It is time for our states to reject coal plants proposed by companies like Dynegy, which plans to add pollution to four of the states on this list and become the worst new global warming polluter in the country. Energy efficiency and renewable energy are powering a renaissance in rural Iowa and creating thousands of new manufacturing jobs for our state. By rejecting coal plants and reducing pollution through energy efficiency and renewable energy our states will prosper and attract new businesses and young workers for the future.”

<u>5 Year Increase</u>		<u>10 Year Increase</u>	
<u>State</u>	<u>2002 to 2007</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>1997 to 2007</u>
TX	18,654,042.8	TX	38,574,470.1
GA	16,816,419.5	AZ	25,728,965.8
AZ	14,936,723.4	GA	24,790,270.0
PA	12,696,330.2	CA	18,766,810.7
CA	11,140,449.4	IL	16,060,639.6
IL	8,898,119.7	AL	15,644,019.7
AL	7,569,555.0	FL	13,734,656.2
MS	5,317,943.2	SC	13,196,399.2
SC	5,088,513.9	OK	12,033,508.8
NC	4,785,153.0	MO	10,946,620.2

### Power Generation and Carbon Emissions

According to the EIP report, **the consumption of electricity accounted for more than 2.3 billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2006, or more than 39.5 percent of total emissions from manmade sources, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Coal-fired power plants alone released more than 1.9 billion tons, or nearly one third of the U.S. total.**

The Department of Energy projects that carbon dioxide emissions from power generation will increase 19 percent between 2007 and 2030 due to new or expanded coal plants being put into service. An additional 4,115 megawatts of new coal-fired generating

capacity was added between 2000 and 2007, with another up to 15,000 megawatts expected to come online in the 2008 through 2012 timeframe.

### Other Key Findings

- **The top 10 states that emitted the most CO2 in 2007** (measured in total tons) are: Texas, Ohio, Florida, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Kentucky, Georgia, Alabama, and West Virginia.

- **The top 10 states with the largest increases in CO2 emissions over the last five years** (between 2002 and 2007) are: Texas, Georgia, Arizona, Pennsylvania, California, Illinois, Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, and North Carolina.

- **The top 10 states with the largest increases over the past ten years** (between 1997 and 2007) are Texas, Arizona, Georgia, California, Illinois, Alabama, Florida, South Carolina, Oklahoma, and Missouri.

**For the full text of the EIP report, go to [www.environmentalintegrity.org](http://www.environmentalintegrity.org).**

### Recommendations:

EIP is calling for the following steps based on the analysis of EPA data:

- **The nation's oldest and dirtiest power plants need to be retired, and replaced with**

**cleaner sources of energy. That will require accelerating the development of wind power and other renewable sources of energy.**

- **Cutting greenhouse gases quickly by reducing the demand for electricity. Smarter building codes, and funding low-cost conservation efforts – such as weatherization of low-income homes, purchase and installation of more efficient home and business appliances – will reduce demand and yield greenhouse gas benefits.**

### The Danger of New Coal Plants

The report warns of the danger of a new wave of conventional coal-fired power plants that would add millions of tons of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. Carbon capture and sequestration (removing and storing the carbon either before or after the fuel is burned) and storing the carbon underground may have long-term potential, but energy efficiency and renewable sources of electricity are likely to provide the greatest benefit over the next five years.

### Data Sources for the Report

The data for the EIP-produced rankings were obtained from recently released U.S. Environmental Protection agency “Clean Air Markets” data. The database is a publicly accessible repository for emissions and other operational data self-reported by the utility

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**CO<sub>2</sub>**, *continued from page 5*

industry, and includes more than 1,000 power plants regulated under the federal Acid Rain Program. Additional information on these programs and the database can be found on EPA's Clean Air Markets web page at <http://www.epa.gov/airmarkets/>.

Net generation data for 2006 is from the U.S. Energy Information Administration, and is available at: [http://www.eia.doe.gov/cneaf/electricity/st\\_profiles/e\\_profiles\\_sum](http://www.eia.doe.gov/cneaf/electricity/st_profiles/e_profiles_sum).

**Environmental Integrity Project**

The Environmental Integrity Project (<http://www.environmentalintegrity.org>) is a nonpartisan and nonprofit organization established in March 2002 to advocate for more effective enforcement of environmental laws. EIP was founded by Eric Schaeffer, who was director of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Regulatory Enforcement.

He resigned in 2002 after publicly expressing his frustration with efforts of the Bush Administration to weaken enforcement of the Clean Air Act and other laws.

**Sierra Club National Coal Campaign**

The Sierra Club's National Coal Campaign is working to ensure coal is mined responsibly and burned cleanly. Across the country the Campaign is fighting to stop the construction of dirty new coal plants and direct the proposed investments into energy efficiency, renewable resources and other clean alternatives. **For more information about the threat posed to our health and our environment visit [www.sierraclub.org/coal](http://www.sierraclub.org/coal).**

In Texas the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club is coordinating with the National Coal Campaign and is currently represented by the Environmental Integrity Project in a contested case against the additional coal-burning power plant unit being proposed for Limestone County by the utility company currently known as NRG.

The Chapter has also requested a contested case proceeding on the proposed Coletto Creek power plant expansion in Goliad County.



P.O. Box 1931 Austin, TX 78767  
 tel: (512)477-1729 fax: (512) 477-8526  
[lonestar.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:lonestar.chapter@sierraclub.org)  
<http://texas.sierraclub.org>

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**REMINDER:** The Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club has scheduled two more coastal public forums on the new environmental flows allocation process. *See the March 13, 2008 State Capitol Report for details.*

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## Sierra Club Coastal Public Forums - 2008

### Registration Form:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (including Area Code) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please register \_\_\_\_ person(s) for the following forum(s):

\_\_\_\_ Bay City – May 20, 2008

\_\_\_\_ Victoria – May 21, 2008

**Registration deadline is Friday, May 16.**

Return registration form to:

**Lone Star Chapter, Sierra Club**

**ATTN: Coastal Public Forums 2008**

**P. O. Box 1931**

**Austin, TX 78767**

**Or fax to 512-477-8526**

There is **no fee** for attending either forum, but **registration in advance is required** to assure that adequate arrangements may be made for food and seating. Seating will be limited.

For further information, please contact Jennifer Walker, Water Resources Specialist, Sierra Club at 512-477-1729 in Austin or via e-mail to [jennifer.walker@sierraclub.org](mailto:jennifer.walker@sierraclub.org).



SIERRA CLUB LONE STAR CHAPTER  
 STATE CONSERVATION OFFICE  
 PO BOX 1931  
 AUSTIN TX 78767

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<http://texas.sierraclub.org/>

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