

Comments
Public Service Company (PSO) State Implementation Plan (SIP) Hearing
Oklahoma DEQ Headquarters
May 20, 2013

I Support the SIP.

In Oklahoma we are fortunate to have an excellent wind corridor which allows us to become a leader in wind energy production. And we have natural gas which can quickly ramp up power to back up wind production. It makes no sense for Oklahoma to spend 63 million dollars a year to import coal when wind is safe, non-polluting, and the wind itself is free. When we send our money to Wyoming to buy coal, we import more than coal. We import asthma, bronchitis, heart attacks and death.

I would have carried in in 200 pounds of sugar today to demonstrate the amount of mercury being released into Oklahoma's environment every year from the Northeastern unit ALONE. But 200 pounds is too great a burden for me to carry. It is also too great a burden for Oklahoma's environment to carry. Just one gram of mercury is enough to contaminate a 20-acre lake. The mercury threat from burning coal is not hypothetical. The fish are already poisoned in many of Oklahoma's lakes.

The Clean Air Act was signed into law in 1963 to protect us, THE PEOPLE, not to protect PSO and other utilities. Some people complain that when PSO is required to comply with the Clean Air Act, the cost of doing business responsibly will increase customer costs. In its plan to resolve the immediate haze problem by shutting down the Northeastern unit PSO estimates customers rates will increase 9.7%. That 9.7% would mean less than \$12 increase per month for a family like mine.

Burning coal is largely responsible for global warming. AND global warming is responsible for the increases in extreme weather we have seen across Oklahoma and the country. My insurance paid \$38,000 to replace the roof on my home, room on the shop, a garage door and guttering in 2010. We were lucky that (one) we were not hurt and (two) that all the damage occurred in one claim. Our friend's damage occurred in 3 separate storms close together, which resulted in their insurance being cancelled even though they had been with the company for many years without claims.

I called my long-time insurance agent last week. He said that previously a "thunderstorm" meant thunder, wind, rain and "maybe pea-size hail". Now he said, almost every thunderstorm brings large hail and tornadoes. Yesterday we watched television for hours as multiple huge E4 tornadoes, at least one a mile wide, crossed Oklahoma.

I say it's time we stop using coal. It's better to spend a relatively few dollars more for wind, natural gas, and solar rather than repeatedly paying thousands of dollars to repair damage caused by a world using too much coal. And while the fear and worry for loved ones is fresh in your mind from yesterday's storms, remember Hurricane Sandy last fall. Sandy cost this nation billions of dollars and lives lost. The increased rates people gripe about today are chump change compared to the consequences we're seeing for years of harm to the environment. It's time we factor in the financial, medical, and emotional consequences of global warming.

PSO needs to follow-through with the SIP to retire the Northeastern unit by 2016 as agreed and ramp up its plans to transition away from coal. It's past time that all utility companies embrace clean energy.

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