



SIERRA  
CLUB

FOUNDED 1892

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

## POWER HOLDINGS COAL SYNGAS PLANT

The Illinois EPA Bureau of Air will hold a public hearing on March 3, 2009 at 7:00 pm at the Knights of Columbus, 130 South Eighth Street, DuBois, IL. The hearing is being held to receive comments and answer questions from the public prior to making a final decision concerning the application. You do not need to be an expert to speak at the public hearing.

### What Is Coal SynGas?

Coal to synthetic natural gas (Coal SynGas) is a dirty fuel produced by gasifying coal. Coal SynGas is being promoted as one solution to our nation's energy problems by the coal industry. However, these polluting giants fail to tell the real story. The life cycle of Coal SynGas creates more than twice as much carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) as the conventional natural gas life cycle – making it a major contributor to global warming. Coal SynGas also requires an immense amount of water to produce – and would mean an increase in devastating coal mining practices.

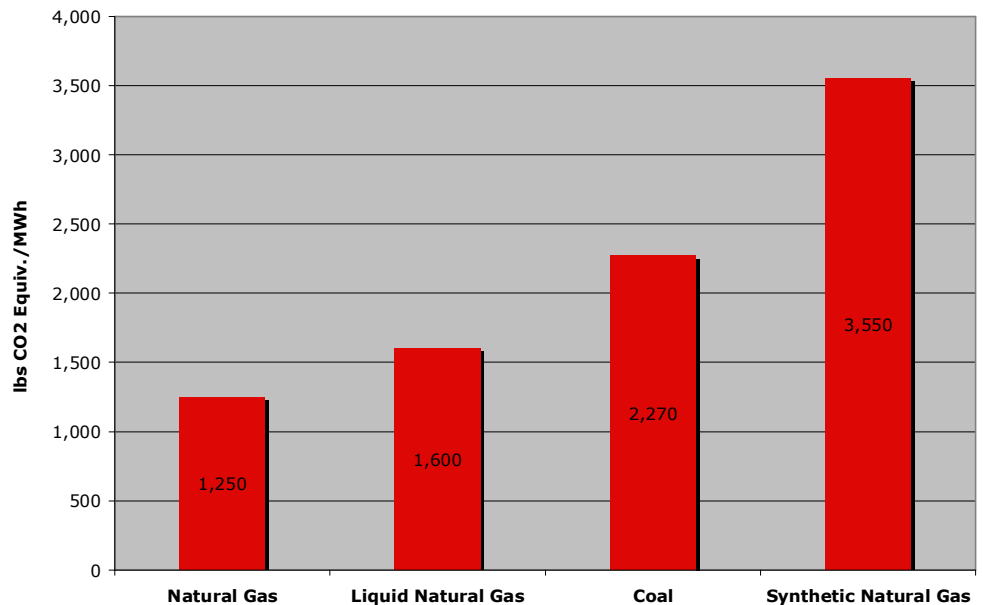
### Power Holdings Coal SynGas

Power Holdings is a Coal SynGas plant being proposed near Mt. Vernon, IL, in Jefferson County. This plant will gasify coal to produce 65 billion cubic feet of synthetic natural gas per year. Power Holdings has applied for an air permit from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA).

Not only will this plant add air pollution and consume water locally, it will significantly contribute to the process of Global Warming by adding up to 10 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> to our atmosphere every year—the equivalent of adding 1.8 million more cars to the road!

### Life Cycle Greenhouse Gas Emissions

without CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration



Data Source: Jaramillo, Paulina; Griffin, W. Michael; and Matthews, H. Scott. "Comparative Life-Cycle Air Emissions of Coal, Domestic Natural Gas, LNG, and SNG for Electricity Generation." *Environmental Science & Technology* 41.17 (2007): 6293

**IEPA should be setting limits in the air permit for carbon dioxide, which is a major contributor to global warming.**

# What's wrong with Coal SynGas?

Compared to natural gas, producing Coal SynGas will create approximately **10 times more soot and smog pollutants**, leading to increased risks of asthma, lung cancer, and other respiratory illnesses.

**5 million tons of coal** will need to be mined annually for this plant. Mines are potential sources of **highly toxic contaminants** like arsenic, mercury, chromium, and cadmium which can damage nervous systems and other organs, especially in children.

Power Holdings will **consume eight million gallons of water a day from Rend Lake**, all of which will be used in the product or evaporated. Rend Lake is a drinking water supply for approximately 300,000 people.

Making synthetic natural gas from coal is **extremely energy intensive** - more than half of the energy needed to turn coal into gas is wasted, never reaching our homes and businesses.



The Great Plains Synfuels Plant in North Dakota (pictured above) produces roughly the same amount of Coal SynGas proposed at the Power Holdings Coal SynGas plant.

## What you can do

### Attend the public hearing:

This public hearing is held for the public to express concerns about how this project will affect them, as well as to ask questions and learn more about the project. There will be IEPA staff there, and it is anticipated that representatives from Power Holdings will attend, although they are not required to answer questions of the public. The conference will be recorded by a court reporter for future reference.



Illinois EPA Bureau of Air  
Public Hearing  
March 3, 2009, 7:00 pm  
Knights of Columbus  
130 S. Eighth Street, DuBois, IL

**Send in written comments about the air permit:** The IEPA Hearing Officer will accept written comments postmarked by midnight, April 2, 2009. Written comments do not need to be notarized. Send your comments to: Illinois EPA, Rachel Doctors - Hearing Officer, Re: Power Holdings, 1021 N. Grand Ave. E., P.O. Box 19276, Springfield, IL 62794-9276.

**Write a Letter to the Editor about the issue:** Tell your neighbors and legislators how you feel.



SIERRA  
CLUB  
FOUNDED 1892

For more info contact:  
Becki Clayborn, Regional Representative  
Sierra Club, 70 E. Lake St, Suite 1500, Chicago, IL, 60601  
312-251-1151 x9 or [becki.clayborn@sierraclub.org](mailto:becki.clayborn@sierraclub.org)  
[www.illinois.sierraclub.org](http://www.illinois.sierraclub.org)