



Environment Colorado



Southwest Energy Efficiency Project

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XCEL ENERGY COULD SAVE ITS CUSTOMERS 2 BILLION DOLLARS

New Report Recommends a Clean Energy Alternative to Xcel's Proposed Coal-Fired Power Plant

Denver, CO: As Xcel CEO Wayne Brunetti delivers the keynote address to the World Renewable Energy Congress Wednesday in Denver, the authors of a new report analyzing the Company's proposed 750 megawatt coal plant noted that the Company is blindly pursuing its proposed coal plant and not looking at other alternatives. "Xcel cannot both champion itself as a leader in clean energy and pursue the largest coal-fired power plant built in Colorado in three decades at the same time," said Mark Detsky, energy attorney for Environment Colorado and report co-author.

The Clean Energy Solution to Xcel Energy's Plans, a report released today by Environment Colorado and the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project, details the economic, environmental, and public health drawbacks to the coal plant Xcel is proposing to build in Pueblo, CO. The report also offers a clean energy alternative—replicating energy efficiency programs Xcel Energy already implements in its home state of Minnesota and adding the amount of renewable energy the Company's own analyses find to be cost-effective. The report suggests that the clean energy alternative would save nearly 2 billion dollars over twenty years, compared to building and operating the new coal plant.

"We do not accept the presumption that a large coal-fired power plant is the best option for meeting growing electricity demand in Colorado," said Detsky, "This new coal plant would be built with consumers assuming its many risks. The plant will emit 9 million tons of carbon dioxide annually, the main contributing pollutant to global warming, as well as tons of mercury over its lifetime. It will also consume a large quantity of water, a precious resource along the Front Range."

On top of these problems, Xcel Energy wishes to bypass the state's competitive bidding process, charge its customers for the costs of the plant before it is completed, and have its customers assume the risk of plant construction delays and budget overflow. "The proposed coal plant may be a good deal for Xcel's shareholders, but it is a bad deal for Colorado's citizens and our environment," Detsky added.

"Xcel Energy operates well-funded, highly effective energy efficiency programs in Minnesota. If the Company replicated those programs in Colorado, it would save over half the energy supplied by Xcel's portion of the proposed coal plant," said Howard Geller, co-author of the report and executive director of the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project. "By further expanding its investments in renewable energy sources such as wind power, Xcel could get the rest of the energy without the drawbacks of a coal plant."

The authors of the report urge Xcel Energy to invest in cost-effective energy efficiency programs and renewable and clean energy alternatives rather than building the coal plant. If Xcel Energy is unwilling to do so on its own, the Colorado Public Utilities Commission has the authority to modify their proposal. The PUC will hold public hearings on the proposed coal plant and the company's energy plan September 23rd in Pueblo and September 27th in Denver.

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