



CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

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cc Mark  
Michelle  
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Andrew H. Macdonald, Ph.D.  
Councilman



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CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE  
ALEXANDRIA, VA  
JUN - 4 A 10: 12

May 31, 2004

TO: Hon. Mayor and Members of Council  
CC: City Manager Phil Sunderland

FROM: Councilman Andrew Macdonald AHM

RE: Alexandria Clean Air Policy: Mirant's *Potomac River Power Plant*

The City Manager recommends that Mirant's *Potomac River Power Plant* be allowed to operate in Alexandria for another ten years. In exchange, Mirant must reduce nitrogen emissions and halt pollution trading at the plant. I don't think we should permit this 55 year-old coal-fired utility plant to pollute our air and water for another ten weeks, let alone another ten years. If the necessary technological improvements cannot be made, because of cost factors or space limitations, then the plant should close. It's that simple.

In addition to carbon dioxide (CO2), coal-burning plants like the *Potomac River Power Plant* currently emit or dispose of a variety of toxic chemicals, including:

- 1) Mercury (Hg)
- 2) Arsenic (As)
- 3) Lead (Pb), cadmium (Cd), and other toxic heavy metals
- 4) Carbon Monoxide (CO)
- 5) Volatile Organic Hydrocarbons (VOC's)
- 6) Oxides of nitrogen (NOX)
- 7) Oxides of Sulfur (SOX)
- 8) Airborne particulate matter (PM), from 10 microns to as small as 2.5 microns
- 9) Coal dust and fly ash

I recommend that we target all these chemicals for removal or control. Mirant must install state-of-the-art clean air technologies to capture or neutralize these chemicals before they are released into the air and water, and take steps to reduce fugitive dust levels in the air around the facility.



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Mirant Power Plant (page 2)

I do agree with the City Manager:

- 1) That all pollution trading should stop
- 2) That a detailed "downwash" study be conducted to determine the immediate health impact of any toxic plume from the plant's four smokestacks on the residents of Alexandria.

But I also recommend:

- 1) That Mirant conduct a detailed "in-stack" chemical analysis of the combustion gases in the plant's four smokestacks.
- 2) That the City expand its network of PM 2.5 micron monitors and collect additional particulate speciation data.

Policy Recommendation:

Mirant should install Best Available Control Technologies (BACT) at its Potomac River Power Plant, or convert it to natural gas. The plant should cease operations immediately if the health risks associated with this plant cannot be eliminated or significantly reduced. In the event that Mirant doesn't, or cannot, comply with these recommendations, instruct the City Manager to provide Council with a range of legal options that it might use to implement these policy goals.

CC: Mr. Poul Hertel  
Ms. Elizabeth Chimento  
Mt. Vernon Chapter of the Sierra Club  
Congressman Jim Moran