

ILLINOIS POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
February 9, 1977

COMMONWEALTH EDISON COMPANY,)
)
) Petitioner,)
)
) v.) PCB 74-16
)
)
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY,)
)
) Respondent.)

ORDER OF THE BOARD (by Mr. Goodman):

This matter comes before the Board upon the Petition of Commonwealth Edison Company (Edison) for Emergency Relief from its Waukegan Station Compliance Plan, filed February 4, 1977. The Petition was originally construed as a variance petition and docketed as PCB 77-44. However, the Board hereby construes the Petition as a Motion for Modification of the Board's Order in PCB 74-16, which bound Commonwealth Edison to a compliance plan for its Waukegan Station. PCB 77-44 is hereby dismissed as moot.

The problem presented herein is an emergency situation created by the severity of this winter season. According to Petitioner, the coal in 600 railroad cars at Petitioner's Powerton Station is frozen and cannot be unloaded at that station. Because of the lack of railroad cars, two mines have been idled since January 11, 1977, rendering unemployed over 500 miners. The Board has received telegrams from the coal companies which own the mines involved herein verifying this sharp reduction in the labor force at these mines due to the unavailability of the railroad cars. The only alternative method for returning the cars to service that Edison has found is to move them to Edison's Waukegan station where there are existing facilities for handling railroad cars to thaw the coal sufficiently so it can be unloaded. This alternative would necessitate burning this Illinois coal, with a sulfur content of about 3.5%, at the Waukegan Station, where Edison has committed not to burn coal with a sulfur content in

excess of 1%. Edison indicates that this coal would be burned at the Waukegan Station over a period of 20-30 days and would represent up to 50% of the Station's total coal burn.

The Agency, in a recommendation filed on February 8, 1977, points out that several safeguards against any potential violation of the ambient air quality standards are built into Waukegan's situation. Under its compliance plan, Edison has installed eleven monitoring stations in the vicinity of its plant, at locations determined by modeling. Furthermore, the Agency indicates that the meteorological conditions most likely to occur during the mid-February to mid-March period coupled with the location of the Waukegan plant render very unlikely the possibility of an air quality excursion due to this plant during the period for which modification is sought.

The Board finds that the severe economic and social hardship caused by the unavailability of the railroad cars coupled with the safeguards against excursions over the air quality standards for this limited period of time warrant modification of the Board's decision in PCB 74-16. This departure from the Board's policy of not granting motions for modification beyond the time period established in Procedural Rule 333 is due solely to the severe hardship evidenced herein. The Board will allow Edison to burn this high sulfur coal at its Waukegan Station until March 6, 1977, provided that such utilization shall be suspended during any time period in which a violation of the primary 24-hour or secondary 3-hour ambient air quality standard for SO₂ would be likely to occur.

The Board hereby modifies its Order in PCB 74-16 by adding the following addendum:

ADDENDUM

The Board's Order herein shall not apply to Edison's Waukegan Plant from February 9, 1977, to March 6, 1977 to the extent that Edison may burn at this plant the coal contained in 600 rail cars currently located at the Powerton Station and described in Edison's February 4, 1977 Petition, subject to the following conditions:

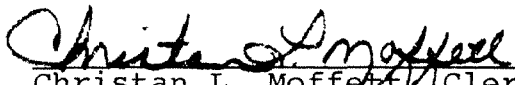
1. Edison shall develop and implement a meteorological forecasting scheme which is capable of identifying the conditions under which the burning of fuel at the Waukegan Station containing up to 50% high sulfur coal (3.5% sulfur) would be likely to cause violations of the primary 24-hour or secondary 3-hour air quality standard for sulfur dioxide.

2. Edison shall utilize such scheme to identify time periods when utilization of high sulfur coal would need to be suspended in order to protect air quality and shall suspend such utilization during such time periods.

3. Edison shall notify the Agency immediately in the event any air quality standard for SO₂ or particulate violation is registered at the Zion or Waukegan monitoring network.

4. Edison shall submit to the Agency and the Attorney General detailed meteorological and air quality data from its meteorological tower at Zion and from the monitoring network at Waukegan within fifteen days after March 6, 1977. Such data shall be supplemented with data as to the relative quantities of high and low sulfur coal burned at each of the three units on a daily basis.

I, Christan L. Moffett, Clerk of the Illinois Pollution Control Board, hereby certify the above Order was adopted on the 9th day of February, 1977 by a vote of 3-0.


Christan L. Moffett, Clerk
Illinois Pollution Control Board