

## **Board Orders Emission Cuts from Power Plants**

On October 1, 2015, the Board finalized rules that will significantly reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), and other pollutants. The reductions ensure that all areas of the State of Illinois will be in compliance with current Federal rules regarding SO<sub>2</sub> concentrations. In particular, the Board's action will require power plants owned by NRG Energy and Dynegy to cut pollution levels and will prohibit burning coal at four units in the Joliet and Lockport areas. (Amendments To 35 Ill. Adm. Code Part 214, Sulfur Limitations, Part 217, Nitrogen Oxides Emissions, and Part 225, Control of Emissions from Large Combustion Sources, R15-21)

The Board approved, with modifications, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's (IEPA) proposal to meet Illinois' obligations under the federal Clean Air Act. The most significant reductions will take place in the two areas that were found to be not in compliance with current National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS): Lemont (Cook and Will Counties) and Pekin (Tazewell and Peoria Counties). IEPA's detailed modeling indicates the rules will result in compliance with NAAQS standards. The Board's order and implemented rules require that four of NRG's coal-fired units cease burning coal, which will effectively eliminate SO<sub>2</sub> pollution from those units (Joliet Units 5, 6 & 7 and Will County Unit 3).

In 2017, ceasing coal combustion will reduce SO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the NRG plants by 6,000 tons and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) by 3,000 tons, compared to the rules currently in effect. Emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>, identified as a primary contributor to global climate change, will fall by 7.5 million tons; particulate matter by 1900 tons; and mercury by 400 pounds per year.

The Board's rules will also reduce pollutants from ethanol production facilities and industrial facilities. The rules establish strict limits on the sulfur content of liquid fuels used by stationary facilities throughout the State.

The Board's revised rules will go into effect upon final approval by the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules and publication in the Illinois Register.

Opinions and orders of the Board, hearing transcripts, and other documents in rulemaking records are posted on the Board's Web site and may be downloaded from the Web without charge. Hard copies may be obtained from the Clerk's Office upon payment of reproduction fees as prescribed by Section 6 of the Freedom of Information Act [5 ILCS 140/6].