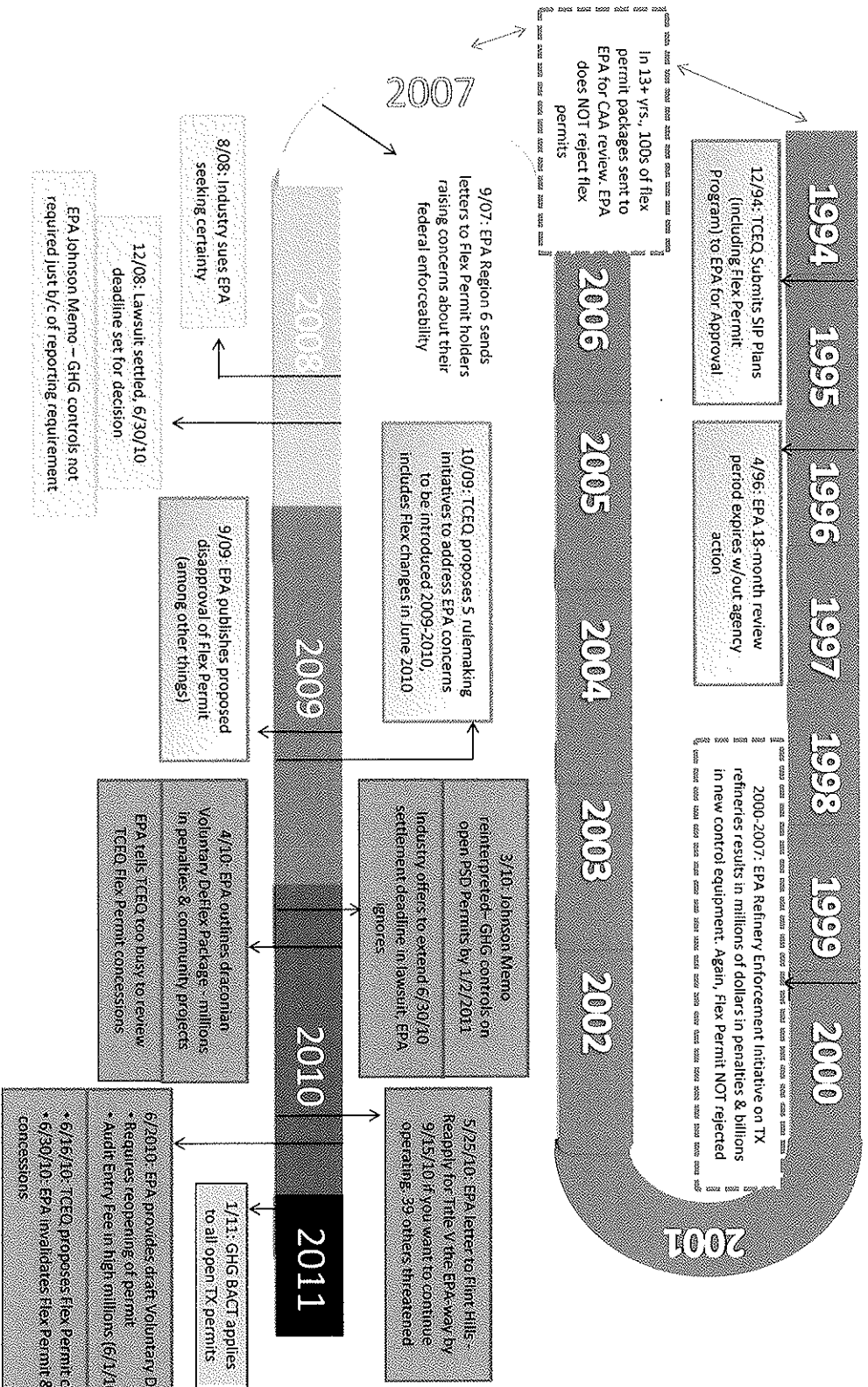
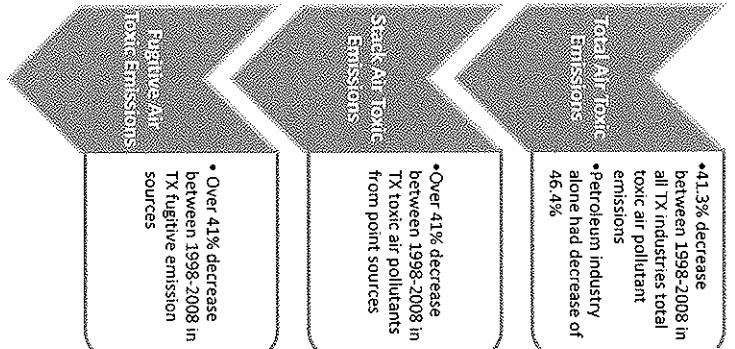


Sixteen Years of Success in Jeopardy



The Texas Air Program Works



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Austin American Statesman statesman.com

Section B

Local utilities aim to cut air pollution

Austin Energy, LCRA say plan will cut some emissions at power plant by 90%

By Samira Jafari
AMERICAN STATESMAN STAFF

Austin Energy and the Lower Colorado River Authority plan to spend \$130 million over the next 10 years to clean up air emissions from the Fayette Power Plant, which provides electricity to much of Central Texas.

The city's electric utility and the LCRA, which co-own two of the three units at the coal-fired plant near La Grange, announced Wednesday that they have filed for a first-of-its-kind permit with the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission. The permit would allow the plant to install scrubbers that would cut certain types of air emissions, including sulfur dioxide, by more than 90 percent. The conservation commission, which has been working with both agencies on the project, has 30 days to make a decision on the permit.

The cost would be split by the LCRA and Austin Energy, which say consumer rate increases won't be needed because the renovations will also improve plant efficiency and won't require them to borrow money. "We are saving money because we will be paying for the project in cash," said Ed Clark, spokesman for Austin Energy. "We will have to manage our business well enough to pay for construction out of operating revenue." LCRA officials said they See EMISSION, B5

What's in the air

Austin Energy and the Lower Colorado River Authority plan to spend \$130 million to reduce air emissions from the Fayette Power Plant. Two of the pollutants expected to be reduced are:

Nitrogen oxide — known to trigger serious respiratory problems; also deteriorates water quality and contributes to acid rain and global warming.

Sulfur dioxide — can cause respiratory illnesses in children and elderly people and aggravate existing heart and lung diseases. Like nitrogen oxide, it's found in acid rain and contributes to the formation of haze that is impairing visibility in some national parks. Sulfur dioxide can travel long distances, meaning damage may occur far from where it's originally emitted.

Source: Environmental Protection Agency

Deep Eddy Pool closed to test water



Council to limit Streets

EMISSIONS: Agency asked to OK plan

Continued from B1

expect the scrubbers, which use wet limestone to filter pollutants, to be installed by 2010. Controls to reduce nitrogen oxide are also under construction and should significantly cut emissions by 2004, said Robbie Searcy, a spokeswoman for the LCRA. High levels of nitrogen oxide and sulfur dioxide in the air can cause respiratory problems and contribute to acid rain, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

The so-called flex permit proposed for this project is a first for the electric power industry because it allows the plant to make a series of improvements at one site without having to seek permits for each individual phase.

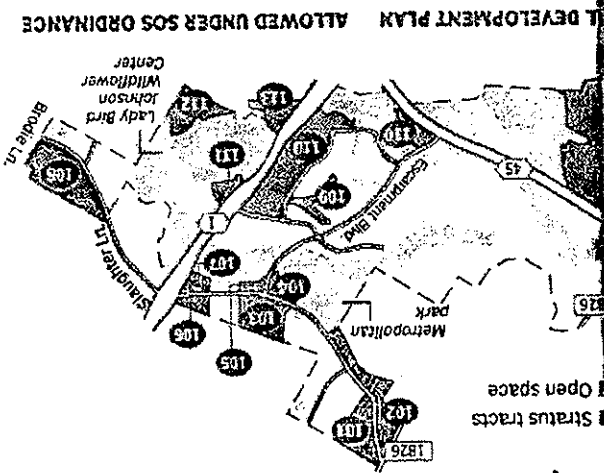
The LCRA and Austin Energy approached the conservation commission earlier in the year about creating the flex permit, which is already used for petroleum plants. Their plan calls for cutting the emission of sulfur dioxide by 90 percent and nitrogen oxide by 50 percent. The conservation commission will solicit public comment after officials review the application.

The request follows the Bush administration's June announcement of plans to repeal some parts of the Clean Air Act that force power plants to install high-tech pollution controllers when they make renovations.

The Austin Energy/LCRA plan "gives us certainty, and we're doing it now to know what to do to clean up our emissions," Searcy said. She added that if federal guidelines were to become stronger, the plant would work to meet the new

Decided to attend

development



ALLOWED UNDER SOS ORDINANCE

Cover* Development Cover*

Tract	Area	Percentage
111	50,000 sq ft. retail	65%
112	214 apartments	23.9%
113	120,000 sq ft. retail	21.7%
114	100 houses	
115	300 apartments	13.8%
116	55,000 sq ft. office	10.9%
117	28,000 sq ft. office	10.4%
118	20,000 sq ft. retail	11.3%
119	43,000 sq ft. retail	12.9%
120	20,000 sq ft. retail	13.1%
121	294 apartments	0.9%
122	1,840,000 sq ft. office	13.7%
123	100 houses	
124	29,000 sq ft. retail	12.1%
125	open space	0.0%
126	123,000 sq ft. office	15.0%
127	44,000 sq ft. retail	24.5%
128	988 houses	18.7%
129	2,046,000 sq ft. office	16.9%
130	326,000 sq ft. retail	
131	808 apartments	
132	1,288 houses	

Source: City of Austin

Austin City Council meeting

Meeting begins at noon. Public hearing begins about 6 p.m.
 Address: Lower Colorado River Authority, Hancock Building boardroom, 700 Lake Austin Blvd.

San Antonio needs canned
 es such as toilet paper and
 No supplies have...



Eric Gay ASSOCIATED PRESS
 Flood-damaged home in New
 day. Several groups are col-
 help flood victims in the area.

Assistance available

— Robert W. Gee

The federal government has issued a disaster declaration for 24 Texas counties, including Travis, Hays, Caldwell, Comal and Guadalupe.

www.comalcountyocc.net, with updated river levels, a cleanup guide and other information related to recovery efforts.

hardest by flooding, established a Web site.

Travis may be closed as early as Friday, officials said.

at Lake Buchanan because levels did not rise as much as anticipated. One of four floodgates open at Mansfield Dam on Lake Buchanan.

Floodgates: The LCRA did not open a third floodgate Wednesday on Lake Travis, spokesman Bill McCann said.

Lake Travis boating: LCRA on Friday will reconsider a boating ban on Lake Travis, spokesman Bill McCann said.

faster than originally expected.

River Authority said the level should drop a half foot a day — 693 feet above mean sea level on Sunday. The Lower Colorado inches Wednesday — the first significant drop since it reached half a foot lower. Water level at Lake Travis ebbed by about 6 inches Wednesday.

Longhorn Dam until 10 tonight. Fire officials will consider today whether to extend the ban.

ban for Lake Austin, Town Lake and the Colorado River below for watercraft at 10 p.m. Wednesday but extended a boating ban for Lake Austin, Town Lake and the Colorado River below Longhorn Dam until 10 tonight. Fire officials will consider today whether to extend the ban.

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Flood developments

Barton Creek ban lifted: The fire chief reopened Barton Creek for watercraft at 10 p.m. Wednesday but extended a boating ban for Lake Austin, Town Lake and the Colorado River below Longhorn Dam until 10 tonight. Fire officials will consider today whether to extend the ban.

Half a foot lower: Water level at Lake Travis ebbed by about 6 inches Wednesday — the first significant drop since it reached 693 feet above mean sea level on Sunday. The Lower Colorado River Authority said the level should drop a half foot a day — faster than originally expected.

Lake Travis boating: LCRA on Friday will reconsider a boating ban on Lake Travis, spokesman Bill McCann said.

Floodgates: The LCRA did not open a third floodgate Wednesday at Lake Buchanan because levels did not rise as much as anticipated. One of four floodgates open at Mansfield Dam on Lake Travis may be closed as early as Friday, officials said.

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ents as part of plea deals

remain free on bail. Valente involved of anybody," Ray says Sillero "was really the part of his plea deal, which led Wednesday in federal prosecutors will dismiss the lead prosecutor in the case. The entire family, except for Valente Sillero, is scheduled to appear in court Friday.

Investigators are still looking for profits from the smuggling operation, which they say total at least several hundred thousand dollars.

cos Sillero and Bannuelos scheduled for comment.

ors for Bannuelos, Mar- and Sylvia Sillero could not

Austin City Council meeting

Meeting begins at noon, public hearing begins about 6 p.m., Lower Colorado River Authority, Hancock Building boardroom, 60 Lake Austin Blvd., Austin cable channel 6

the Web: Details of Stratus agreement available at w.cityofaustin.org

Source: City of Austin

Category	Percentage	Count
20,000 sq ft. retail	40%-55%	294 apartments
open space	0%	1,840,900 sq ft. office
1,840,900 sq ft. office	40%-55%	100 houses
29,000 sq ft. retail	40%-55%	12.1%
open space	0%	0.3%
123,000 sq ft. office	40%-55%	15.0%
44,000 sq ft. retail	40%-55%	24.6%
988 houses	40%-55%	18.7%
2,046,000 sq ft. office	41%-55%	16.9%
808 apartments		
1,288 houses		

Local environmental groups have applauded the utilities' proactive approach to seeking the permit and setting higher emissions standards.

"This action proves that utilities can improve their efficiency and reduce their emissions at the same time, which is the goal of the Clean Air Act," Jim Marston, Texas director for the Environmental Defense Fund, said in a statement. "Doing the right thing environmentally is not too expensive and not too risky and is certainly worth the benefit to our health."

stater@statesman.com; 912-5932

