

February 25, 2011

Voice of the People  
Attn: Dodie Hofstetter  
Chicago Tribune  
Ctc-TribLetter@tribune.com

Dear Editor:

The Tribune's front-page article of February 22 -- "Power Company Holds Off on Cleaning Up Chicago Plants" -- is based on false statements and assumptions regarding compliance with environmental regulations by the Fisk and Crawford power plants owned by Midwest Generation.

The premise for the article is that our company is delaying emission reductions required under state and federal regulations. This is false.

We operate under an agreement with the State of Illinois that requires steep and ongoing emissions reductions. Under that agreement, we were one of the first companies to install mercury emission controls -- in 2008. State rules also require that we further reduce our emissions of nitrogen oxide by nearly 70 percent beginning in 2012. Construction to achieve those reductions is underway.

State rules also require that we further reduce sulfur dioxide emissions beginning in 2013 and continuing each year through 2018 -- or retire power generating units if we determine that installation of additional controls is not economic. Our company has stated publicly for more than a year that due to uncertainty about new federal regulations now in development, coupled with depressed power prices, we will likely defer the decisions on whether to retrofit or retire certain units as long as practical -- but still within the regulatory deadlines.

The story also incorrectly states that we have permits for the sulfur dioxide projects and that "financing is set to go." This is not true. We have only just begun to permit the additional projects that are the focus of this story and no specific financing arrangement has been set.

The story also references "recently filed documents" about our plans. This is a reference to regular, quarterly reports filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The language in those reports about our plans has remained essentially unchanged for more than a year.

Finally, the story relegates to one dismissive sentence a reference to two recent studies by nationally respected experts on air quality commissioned by Midwest Generation and ignores the key finding of those reports -- that emissions from Crawford and Fisk account for less than half of one-percent of particulate matter concentrations in Cook County air. In contrast, the story devotes two lengthy paragraphs to claims made in studies commissioned by environmental groups whose agenda is to shut down Fisk and Crawford. Air pollution is a serious issue that deserves factual reporting, not the inaccurate and misleading statements and allegations in this story.

Sincerely,

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