



News Release

**Washington State
Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council**

PO Box 43172
Olympia, WA 98504-3172

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**CONTACT: Allen Fiksdal
360-956-2152**

EFSEC To Adopt Rules for Large Energy Plants

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC) has launched a formal process to adopt rules for siting combustion turbine electrical generation facilities. EFSEC Chair Jim Luce noted, “This action responds to Governor Locke’s directive that we develop clear, quantifiable standards for siting energy facilities to avoid the uncertainty that can complicate the permitting process, and to expedite decision-making.”

EFSEC is the State’s “one-stop shopping” agency for the siting of large thermal plants. Its rules govern the power plant approval process for facilities 350 megawatts or larger and its siting recommendations, if approved by the Governor, bind all State and local agencies. A 350 megawatt plant is large enough to meet twenty-five percent of Seattle’s annual power needs.

EFSEC began discussing possible changes to rules in December 2001, and initiated a stakeholder discussion group that represented industry, business, environmental, labor, and local and state government interests. Stakeholder discussions were completed in September 2002, and are summarized in the “Krogh-Leonard Report” which is found on the EFSEC website at www.efsec.wa.gov. Luce noted, “Our stakeholder group met eleven times over nearly one year and produced some very creative options for addressing very complicated issues.”

EFSEC’s goal is to adopt rules that help to achieve the legislature’s statutory policy objective of assuring abundant power at reasonable cost while protecting the public interest and the environment. The “stakeholder group” provided recommendations on how to meet this goal in twelve areas ranging from wetlands to air emissions. Rules requiring mitigation for CO₂ and greenhouse gas are likely to receive significant attention. Governor Locke told the stakeholder group during their discussions that he was looking for “clear standards for mitigation of CO₂ and other air pollutants.”

The first step in adopting siting standards will be open informal discussions of possible rule language at EFSEC’s regularly scheduled public meetings on the first three Mondays of each month. Following these informal discussions, the second step will be for EFSEC to identify preferred rule language for public comment. After public hearings are conducted on the tentative preferred rule language, the third step will be for EFSEC to consider all the comments and either formally issue a notice to adopt the proposed rule or send it back for more discussion.

EFSEC may group several of the twelve subjects together and consider specific groups at one time rather than take action on all twelve subjects at one time. However, Chair Luce added, “what we want at the end of this process is a complete package that meets the Governor’s directive to establish clear, quantifiable siting standards consistent with the state policy of assuring abundant power at reasonable cost while protecting the public interests and the environment.” EFSEC will develop a more complete schedule for this activity but anticipates completing work in the summer of 2003.

EFSEC is an independent state board with a chair appointed by the Governor and representatives from five state agencies. Information regarding EFSEC, rules and standards development, and projects under review can be found on its web site at www.efsec.wa.gov. Copies of specific rules being considered for adoption are also available for review at the EFSEC office in Olympia.