

40+ New Natural Gas Power Plants in PA's Future Pennsylvanians Against Fracking Position Statement



This is the third in a series of statements on the Clean Power Plan presented by Pennsylvanians Against Fracking. In our last statement on the Plan (bit.ly/cpppaf), we discussed a loophole that allows states to exempt power plants built after January 8, 2014 from their compliance plans. This time, we look at how many new plants have been approved in PA since that time.

On July 27, 2016, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection responded to a Right To Know request for [a list](#) of all natural gas power plants considered and/or approved since January 2014, the date after which new plants can be exempt from the state's Clean Power Plan compliance plan. The agency reported that 42 new plants that would add approximately 8000 megawatts to the grid were approved. The agency approved every plant it considered.

While all of the plants could be exempt from the plan, should the state exercise its discretion, twenty one of the plants are guaranteed exemption from the plan because their capacity falls at or below the minimum 25 megawatts required before a plant is subject to the plan.

An investigation of media and industry reports conducted by Pennsylvanians Against Fracking found that only four of the power plants are coal plant conversions, Panda Hummel Station, NRG Shawville, NRG New Castle, and Talen Brunner Island. A 43rd plant on the list, Armstrong Power LLC, appears to be an existing natural gas power plant that is adding five diesel emergency generator engines. Our investigation also turned up 15 additional plants not included on the DEP's list. Some are listed in industry reports as being in the conceptual phase, meaning more plants could be coming.

In fact, the list only includes plants approved over a span of two and a half years, so it's likely that it will continue to grow as more plants are proposed and approved. J. Winston Porter, a national energy and environment consultant and a former EPA assistant administrator confirmed that the Clean Power Plan will ensure that more plants and more drilling are in our future when he wrote recently in an op-ed in *The Morning Call*, "... keep in mind that President Obama's proposed Clean Power Plan requires a 32 per cent reduction of carbon emissions from the nation's power plants by 2030. To have any chance to meet this goal America will need to depend primarily on natural gas, much of which is produced in Pennsylvania by hydraulic fracturing, or fracking." [i]

The proposed plants are but the beginning of what lies ahead for Pennsylvania if the state adopts a Clean Power Plan that places natural gas as a clean energy fuel. The intent is clear; natural gas will be the next energy to power not only Pennsylvania but the nation as well, to the detriment of the development of renewable energy sources and despite climate change being the singular health and environmental threat the world faces. It promotes a business plan for the exploitation of Pennsylvania shale gas in the guise of a climate saving model. However, in order to avoid a catastrophic rise in global temperatures beyond the 2 degree C mark, Pennsylvania, the nation and the planet need a truly Clean Power Plan that moves us directly from all fossil fuels and toxic energy production to safe, clean renewable energy.

Find the spreadsheet of power plants at bit.ly/PowerPlantList.

[i] <http://www.mcall.com/opinion/yourview/mc-fracking-benefits-porter-yv--20160725-story.html>