

Theresa McClenaghan

From: "Keith Stewart" <keith@torontoenvironment.org>
To: "energy-vision" <energy-vision@list.web.net>
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2005 1:13 PM
Subject: [Energy-vision] 'Cleaner coal' and climate change

I won't be able to attend the next meeting as I will be on vacation (so I can move - fun!). But I think it is important to note that Energy Probe's data on 'cleaner coal' omits the fact that the Lambton coal generating station emits 860 kg of CO₂ per MWh of electricity generated, while efficient natural gas emits in the 260 - 400 kg/MWh range.

And the more end-of-pipe controls you put on coal generators to partially remove some of the contaminants, the less efficient the plant becomes and the higher the CO₂ emissions/MWh will be (along with a number of the carcinogens, etc.).

Our best climate scientists are telling us that we need to reduce greenhouse gases (CO₂ is the main one) by 25 - 30% by 2020 relative to 1990 levels and 60 - 80% by 2050 if we are to stabilize the climate with less than a 2 degree C increase relative to pre-industrial levels.

More than 2 degrees and climate change becomes catastrophic.

In Canada our greenhouse gas emissions are currently 24% above 1990 levels.... Makes massive investment in conservation and renewables look pretty good, and support for coal untenable.

Keith

Tom Adams wrote:

I would like an item -- Cleaner Coal vs. Gas -- included on the agenda of the October 26th EV meeting. I would like to present the findings of Energy Probe's research on the emissions and costs of cleaner coal vs. gas and to answer questions. I would propose to pre-circulate key findings to assist people in preparing their questions.

Tom

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Letter to the editor of the Belleville Intelligencer

Your editorial, "Ontarians needs answers on future of power supply?" (October 12) relied only on press reports of Energy Probe's analysis of the environmental performance of Ontario's coal plants, leaving your readers with a mistaken impression of our analysis.

The report, available at www.energyprobe.org, shows that nuclear power cannot replace coal, any more than wind power can, because neither are sufficiently reliable to keep the lights on.

Gas-fired power is the government's main plan to replace coal, but, like nuclear, its costs are unaffordable. Our report shows that since being modernized with pollution controls, Ontario's cleanest coal plants have lower acid gas emissions than many gas-fired plants but for approximately a third the cost. New coal facilities using off the shelf technology could slash emissions much lower still. Combined with conservation and renewable energy, cleaner coal is better solution for Ontario consumers than nuclear and gas.

Tom Adams, Executive Director, Energy Probe

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From: "Keith Stewart" <keith@torontoenvironment.org>
To: <energy-vision@list.web.net>; <tomadams@nextcity.com>; "Jack Gibbons" <jgibbons@pollutionprobe.org>
Sent: Friday, October 07, 2005 7:04 PM
Subject: Re: [Energy-vision] Letter of concern addressed to OntarioCleanAirAlliance re. cleaner coal

Hi Tom and Jack:

I can appreciate Tom's sense of desperation as it seems to me that Energy Probe has backed themselves into a corner where coal appears to be the only option.

Correct me if I am wrong, but:

- Energy Probe is currently before the OEB opposing energy efficiency programs for low-income households (which I think are really important on social justice grounds and even my most pro-market Bay Street economist friend acknowledges that such programs are justified on the grounds of market failure (e.g. lack of capital to invest, split incentives between landlords and tenants, etc.));
- Energy Probe is on-record as opposing higher (if any) efficiency standards for appliances (and possibly buildings) as unwarranted intervention in the market;
- Energy Probe opposes mandatory conservation programs for local utilities (and possibly governments?) on the same grounds;
- in its role on the Market Design Committee, Energy Probe opposed a Renewable Portfolio Standard (a requirement for a certain percentage of electricity to come from green sources, and this level would increase over time) as unwarranted intervention in the marketplace (although even George Bush's Texas had an RPS);
- Energy Probe seems (and I really hope I'm wrong on this) to not be concerned about climate change (hence the huge carbon emissions from coal don't really matter), and in fact give 'green' cover to the most prominent denier of climate science and SUV-defender in the country (columnist Margaret Wente of the Globe and Mail) by having her on your board.

Given the foreclosing of a lot of the potential for enhancing energy efficiency and promoting renewables, then coal looks necessary and 100% renewables is unthinkable because the long-term costs of a carbon-intensive source of energy (i.e. climate change) are ignored.

But I think if you re-visit some of the above then the true green alternative is viable and, moreover, necessary.

I will confess a certain amount of jealousy for the brilliance and success

of Jack's coal phase-out campaign, but I think the most productive thing we can do is build upon that success to get the future we want, as opposed to a dreary one that seems unavoidable given starting assumptions that rule out some of the most effective tools available to us.

Keith Stewart
TEA

----- Original Message -----

From: "Jack Gibbons" <jgibbons@pollutionprobe.org>
To: <tomadams@nextcity.com>; <energy-vision@list.web.net>
Sent: Friday, October 07, 2005 2:17 PM
Subject: RE: [Energy-vision] Letter of concern addressed to Ontario
CleanAirAlliance re. cleaner coal

> Hi Tom,
>
> As you know, the OCAA has campaigned for many years for the phase-out of
> Ontario's coal-fired power plants. We are very pleased that Premier
> McGuinty has promised to phase-out all of our dirty coal plants by 2009.
We
> believe that Ontario can achieve this target and eliminate its need for
> coal-fired electricity imports from the U.S.
>
> The Nanticoke coal-fired power plant is the #1 air polluter in Canada.
The
> Lambton coal-fired power plant, near Sarnia, is the #2 air polluter in
> Ontario. The phase-out of our coal-fired power plants will provide
Ontario
> with approximately 50 to 80% of the total greenhouse gas emission
reductions
> the entire province needs to meet its Kyoto Protocol target for 2010.
>
> The OCAA's long-term goal is to move Ontario towards a 100% renewable
> electricity sector. We believe that the use of natural gas as a
> transitional fuel for electricity generation is appropriate.
>
> Jack
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