



For Immediate Release

Contact: Melissa Merz

312-814-3118

877-844-5461 (TTY)

mmerz@atg.state.il.us

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MADIGAN: PROPOSED SETTLEMENT COULD CLEAR THE AIR OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS AT ELECTRIC CO-OP'S POWER PLANT

Springfield – Attorney General Lisa Madigan today said operational changes and equipment upgrades at a southern Illinois electric power plant should help to ensure that the facility remains in compliance with clean air laws.

Madigan said a proposed settlement with Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC) would resolve a May 2004 complaint that alleged federal clean air limits for particulate and sulfur dioxide emissions were exceeded at the co-op's electric generating power plant on Lake of Egypt Road in Marion. SIPC also would pay a civil penalty of \$48,000 according to terms of the settlement proposal submitted January 12 before the Illinois Pollution Control Board (IPCB).

In 2001, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) issued a violation notice to SIPC for alleged failure to maintain and operate the power plant's Unit #4 generator in a manner consistent with good air pollution control practices, which resulted in more than 2,000 alleged instances of unacceptably high particulate emissions and excessive sulfur dioxide emissions. Such emissions can contribute to acid rain and aggravate respiratory conditions like asthma.

SIPC does not admit wrongdoing in the proposed settlement. Madigan notes that SIPC has worked with the IEPA to resolve the alleged violations by replacing and upgrading some equipment, instituting a preventive maintenance program, hiring an outside contractor to teach a repair class to the co-op's electricians and installing an alarm system to warn operators of potential opacity exceedences. In addition, SIPC has corrected record keeping problems outlined in the IEPA violation notice and referral to the Attorney General's office.

Assistant Attorney General Jennifer Bonkowski is handling the case for Madigan's Environmental Protection Division.

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