

Environmental Health Coalition

COALICION de SALUD AMBIENTAL

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Media Release

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South Bay Power Plant will shutdown in December *Regional Board reaffirms that discharge permit will expire at year's end*

(San Diego) – The San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board today reaffirmed that the water discharge permits for the aging South Bay Power Plant will not be administratively renewed after they expire in December 2010. The plant cannot operate after that time without a applying for approval of new discharge permit, which seemed unlikely. This would effectively end an environmental and public health nightmare that has plagued South Bay residents for 50 years.

“We applaud the Regional Board for rejecting attempts by Dynegy and the California Independent System Operator to pull another end-run around public health and have this permit extended without public input,” said Laura Hunter of the Environmental Health Coalition. “I can’t think of anything that would make the December holiday season brighter than seeing this monstrosity shut down.”

Air and water pollution from the South Bay Power Plant have devastated the sensitive ecosystem of South San Diego Bay and impacted the health of people who live and work nearby. Its inefficient technology (emitting up to one million tons of greenhouse gasses annually) costs San Diego rate payers \$35 million a year.

The plant's use of San Diego Bay water kills billions of fish larvae and millions of sea creatures when operating at full capacity. The hot water discharge contaminated with pollution during 50 years of operations has fundamentally altered the marine ecosystem in the South Bay.

“My children have seen the damage this power plant has done to our environment. They will soon see the end and a new beginning,” said Mariana Lopez, a Chula Vista resident and EHC Community Leader. “The South Bay Power Plant is no longer welcome in our neighborhood.”

Adequate energy generation and transmission are now in place to meet the energy needs of the region. Otay Mesa Energy Center (OMEC) went online officially on October 3, 2009 and many peaker plants have been sited in the South Bay since 1999. Using the California ISO's and the State Energy Commission's own calculation formulas, our region has as much as 400 surplus megawatts without the South Bay Power Plant.

“The days of Dynegy and the ISO deceiving and exploiting this community are finally over,” said Gabriel Solmer, legal director for San Diego Coastkeeper.

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