

**February 20, 2009**  
**For Immediate Release**

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**60-Day Clock For Nuclear Opponents Starts Ticking:  
Opposition to Expansion of South Texas Project in Place**

AUSTIN, TX The NRC posted notice today on the Federal Register regarding the opportunity to intervene in the application of South Texas Nuclear Operating Company (STPNOC) to build two reactors at the South Texas Project (STP) nuclear plant site, near Bay City. Citizens now have only 60 days to prepare and present their legal case in opposition to the reactors.

Citizen groups are opposing the proposed reactors, including the newly formed Bay City based organization, South Texas Association for Responsible Energy (STARE), Sustainable Energy and Economic Development (SEED) Coalition, Public Citizen, and others who will intervene in the case.

“New reactors would saddle homeowners and taxpayers with additional debt for infrastructure, more radioactive waste that would sit in our community, and more risk of nuclear accidents, health impacts and radioactive exposure,” said Susan Dancer, Director of the South Texas Association for Responsible Energy in Bay City, Texas. “These are among the many reasons we will intervene in opposition to more nuclear reactors.”

“CPS Energy has been stealthily and irresponsibly getting San Antonio deeper and deeper into this nuclear boondoggle, which is already raising our utility rates,” said Cindy Weehler of the Consumers' Energy Coalition. “There are cleaner, more affordable ways to generate electricity. Energy efficiency should be prioritized, not put on a back burner. With the economic downturn, we shouldn't generate power that's not needed. San Antonio has reduced energy use by 16% over the past two years. Why should we even consider antiquated reactors that could cost \$17.5 billion and would leave radioactive waste for generations to come?”

“The streamlined combined construction and operating license process is designed to cut citizens out and limit public involvement. Safety concerns are taking a backseat to cost-cutting measures and the public doesn't even know it yet” said Karen Hadden, Executive Director of the Sustainable Energy and Economic Development (SEED) Coalition.

Nuclear opponents point out the troubled history of existing STP Units 1 & 2, reactors which ran six times over budget and were eight years late coming online. This sordid history includes harassment and illegal firing of employees who lodged safety complaints, theft of materials, subcontractor price-fixing schemes, and falsification of quality assurance/quality control reports.

Before either unit was in operation The *Austin Light* newspaper reported on February 17, 1988, "There are currently more than 650 allegations concerning safety, costs and criminal activities brought by people who have worked on the project." NRC Region IV became a target for a US Senate committee investigation for "corrupt" oversight of construction practices at STNP and Comanche Peak, another Brown and Root project. Sen. John Glenn said the agency is "more lapdog than watchdog."

STPNOC includes NRG and CPS Energy, the municipal utility in San Antonio. Austin Energy, a partner in existing reactors at the site, has declined to participate in the proposed expansion.

An indefinite suspension of the license hearing was obtained through a petition SEED Coalition filed last year, based on the incomplete nature of the application. That suspension has now ended with the notice issued today by the NRC on the Federal Register regarding the public's opportunity to request participation in the hearing regarding the South Texas Project COL. The deadline for filing a request to participate is April 21. Citizens must develop their contentions, their legal case, during this extremely short time period, despite the fact that further revisions of the application are still anticipated.

The notice is online at <http://frwebgate4.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WAISdocID=144357158313+0+3+0&WAIAction=retrieve>

The notice is entitled "South Texas Project Nuclear Operating Company Application for the South Texas Project Units 3 and 4; Notice of Order, Hearing, and Opportunity To Petition for Leave To Intervene." This federal register notice was published as Volume 74, No. 33, pages 7934-7938.

The federal register notice along with information regarding the history of the existing ST(N)P reactors will also be posted at [www.NukeFreeTexas.org](http://www.NukeFreeTexas.org).

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