

NEWS



301 West 13th Street • HAYS, KS 67601 • TEL: 785.628.2845 • WWW.SUNFLOWER.NET

DATE: May 12, 2004

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Steve Miller
785.623.3364
smiller@sunflower.net

SUNFLOWER COALITION RESEARCHES MERCURY REMOVAL

HOLCOMB, KS—In cooperation with the Department of Energy and a number of other utilities and coal companies, Sunflower and its cooperative coal supplier, Western Fuels Association, are conducting tests to establish the cost and practicality of reducing mercury emissions at Sunflower's generating plant at Holcomb, Kansas.

This project is using maturing mercury control technologies in a full-scale demonstration that will determine the most effective removal methods, including the use of activated carbon, sorbent injection, and coal blending. Even with the dramatic increase in production at Sunflower's Holcomb Station in recent years, mercury emissions for the plant in 2003 amounted to only 251 pounds.

The policy for mercury removal was instigated in December 2000, when EPA issued a "regulatory determination" under the Clean Air Act (CAA) that regulation of mercury is "appropriate and necessary" for coal- and oil-fired power plants.

EPA agreed in response to a lawsuit to issue a proposed rule to regulate mercury from power plants by December 2003, and to finalize the rule by December 2004. Utilities in the U.S. release about 48 tons of mercury per year, or about 40% of domestic anthropogenic emissions but only one percent of the annual global mercury emissions.

The initial test results at Sunflower's plant show the potential for dramatic improvements in mercury control; however, the testing will not be concluded until August 2004 with a final report expected by the end of the year. Once the field testing tasks are accomplished, the data obtained during testing will be analyzed, and the economic information will be studied in advance of the final site report which is forecast to be completed by January 2005.

Sunflower Electric Power Corporation is a regional wholesale power supplier that owns and operates a 595 MW system of gas and coal-fired generating plants and a 1,200-mile transmission system for the needs of its six member cooperatives who serve 120,000 people spread throughout a 21,000 square mile area in western Kansas. Sunflower also provides power to regional utilities in western Kansas and in ten states.