



Continuous Improvement: Reducing Truck Traffic and Improving Particulate Matter (PM) in the City of Alexandria and the Region

Project Overview

The Potomac River Generating Station (PRGS) has recently conducted a review of its coal ash handling operations to identify opportunities for improvement providing benefit to the business and the community in which we operate. Lengthening the rail track within the facility at the existing ash silos an additional sixty (60) feet will allow PRGS to:

- Move more material per gallon of fuel,
- Reduce the number of dump trucks by 50%, and
- Reduce Particulate Matter (TSP) by 495 lbs/ year.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Will this result in more trains moving through Alexandria?

A: No, PRGS will continue to receive only one or two train deliveries per day. With this project, PRGS will be able to accommodate approximately 3 – 4 more rail cars per train within the facility. Each rail car holds material equal to 6 dump trucks.

Q: I sometimes get blocked at my workplace at Canal Center Plaza by the trains making deliveries to PRGS, will the longer train mean more time with a blocked entrance or exit?

A: No, in fact Mirant PRGS personnel and the NS Conductor have been working on an improved communication and coordination protocol to minimize the likelihood of a street being blocked by the trains. Mirant PRGS will make reasonable efforts to clear Track 1 within the plant property to accommodate the train delivery within the facility and minimize the need to stage the train within the City and move cars around. This should reduce streets being blocked and also reduce the amount of time for a delivery at PRGS.

Q: How many trucks will this remove from City streets?

A: Mirant PRGS began hauling of dry coal ash by rail in January 2009 utilizing specialized containers. That effort along with the transition to covered rail cars has already reduced truck hauls by 50% from an average 35 trucks a day to just fewer than 15 trucks per day. The additional sixty feet provided by this project will reduce that number to an average of about 6 trucks per day.



Q: What is the air quality improvement to the community by completing this project?

A: Mirant estimates Particulate Matter emissions, including PM2.5 emissions, reductions of nearly 495 pounds per year for total suspended particles of less than 50 um in size. The estimation is based on the elimination of six trucks per day, operating five days per week and using emissions sources from EPA for paved roads (Source: USEPA, 2006 ; AP-42, Section 13.2.1.3 for Paved Roads). The estimated PM2.5 emission reductions are approximately 24 pounds per year.

Q: Will PRGS operating hours change for deliveries of trains or trucks?

A: Delivery schedules are unchanged.

- Truck deliveries are restricted to a 7 a.m. – 3 p.m. window;
- Trucks will continue to be covered and washed before leaving the property;
- Rail deliveries and associated activities occur between 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. and again between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m.
- Rail cars hauling dry coals ash will be covered and loose debris removed.

Q: What kind of construction is required for this project, will large and noisy equipment be needed?

A: This is a small project with little equipment required other than a backhoe and similar equipment. PRGS contractors will perform construction in compliance with the noise ordinance of the City of Alexandria.

Q: Is this project part of the Agreement with the City of Alexandria to reduce fugitive dust and PM2.5 emissions?

A: No, this is a voluntary business decision funded entirely by the company. It is, however, a project that will have a direct improvement on fugitive dust and PM emissions for the City residents and the region.

Q: Pursuant to the terms of the Agreement with the City of Alexandria, the City Council recently approved spending funds from the \$34 m escrow account to install a 30-ft windscreen around the coal pile, will this rail upgrade affect the installation of such a windscreen?

A: No, if the City of Alexandria decides to pursue the installation of the windscreen to help control fugitive dust emissions, PRGS will install the screen as designed and recommended by the independent engineering firm.