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Alexandria City Council Approves Settlement With Mirant On Its Potomac River Generating Station

On Tuesday, July 1, the Alexandria City Council approved a settlement agreement between the City and Mirant regarding its Potomac River Generating Station (PRGS). The approval followed a unanimous recommendation from the City's Mirant Community Monitoring Group, which met on June 30 to review the potential settlement and recommended that the City approve the terms of the settlement agreement. The settlement document and additional information can be viewed at alexandriava.gov.

The results of this agreement represent the considerable work undertaken by the community since the Alexandria City Council and Environmental Policy Commission passed a resolution in June 2004 that addressed concerns about health and environmental impacts on the community from PRGS operations. PRGS was constructed in 1949, and had not undergone major upgrades to improve air quality since the 1970s. The facility was identified as the single largest source of particulate matter in the City. Particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) is comprised of solid particles or liquid droplets tiny enough to remain suspended in the air and is known to have adverse health effects on people.

In 2004, the Alexandria City Council established the Mirant Community Monitoring Group to examine ongoing operations at the plant and work to address the health and environmental issues that resulted from emissions at the PRGS facility. The agreement represents significant progress toward the goals established in June 2004 by providing for the following actions:

- Requires the investment of \$34 million by Mirant on new pollution control technology for PM2.5 and PM10 emissions, including baghouses, enhanced pollution-control equipment, or a combination of modern technologies.
- Gives the City control over selection and implementation of these new technology controls
- Imposes a PM2.5 emission limit that complies with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.
- Requires Mirant to drop its legal challenge to the sulfur dioxide (SO₂) emissions limit of 3,813 tons per year, thereby locking in this limit.
- Requires installation of carbon monoxide (CO) and particulate matter (PM) continuous emissions monitors, on a defined schedule, allowing enforcement of applicable limits.
- Gives the City access to the plant during the design and installation of the new controls, and to critical monitoring data including PM hourly stack and ambient short-term SO₂ 5-emissions data.
- Requires immediate installation of additional fugitive dust controls.
- Requires installation and operation of an additional PM2.5 monitor.

For more information regarding the settlement, please contact City Attorney Ignacio Pessoa at 703.838.4433.