

NEW ORLEANS ENERGY HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Louisiana Public Health Institute and the Alliance for Affordable Energy are conducting a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) on different electric power resource options for New Orleans.

What is the decision being made?

As a result of the decommissioning of Michoud Power Plant Units 2 and 3 located in New Orleans East, Entergy New Orleans customers will require the replacement of around 300 MW of energy. This energy is needed most during “peaking” times, i.e. June, July, and August around 5-7 pm. The New Orleans City Council regulates how power is generated, and the HIA team is working to understand how the different energy generation options could impact the health of New Orleans citizens.

Why conduct an HIA?

The HIA team is going through this process to analyze the health impacts of different energy sources in order to inform the City Council on ways their energy generation decisions can maximize the benefits and reduce the negative impacts on health.

What options are being studied?

The HIA will study the impacts of a new combustion turbine natural gas plant which is currently proposed by Entergy New Orleans; a natural gas/solar hybrid power plant alternative; a solar “farm;” and a clean burning municipal solid waste to energy/recycling plant, which another company is proposing to the City Council.

Each of these options could have positive and negative impacts on health. Currently the siting opportunities for each of these options, including the default, are in New Orleans East within 20 miles of the current Michoud Power plant location.

How can the New Orleans community be involved?

Residents and stakeholders in New Orleans East and the surrounding communities will be an important part of this process. The HIA Team will be reaching out to gather input on the possible health impacts of each option, review the assessment and community profile, and help approve the final recommendations. The HIA final recommendations will be presented to the City Council Utility Committee.

Where can I find more information?

<http://all4energy.org/our-work/health-impact-assessment/>

Who should I contact to get my community involved in the HIA process?

Please contact Amanda Carruth: acarruth@lphi.org or (504) 872-0796

WHAT IS HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT?

HIA IS

“a combination of procedures, methods, and tools by which a policy, a program, or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population and the distribution of effects within the population”

(GOTHENBURG CONSENSUS PAPER, 1999)

An HIA looks at unintended health effects and its purpose is to inform decision-making. The process includes 5 steps and is systematic, but flexible.

Why is HIA done? Decisions impact health, but decision-makers don't always think about health. HIA can help decision-makers think about how their decisions might impact the Social Determinants of Health.

- To identify harms and benefits before decisions are made.
- To inform discussions of the trade-offs of a policy/plan/project/program.
- To identify evidence-based strategies to promote health and prevent disease.
- To increase transparency, support inclusiveness, democracy, and community engagement in the policy decision-making process.
- To help shift decision making from an economic to quality of life framework.
- To meet regulatory requirements.

Source: Human Impact Partners, HIA Toolkit, 3rd Edition and other sources

THE PROCESS

Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine if HIA is required or useful • Saves time, money, and resources
Scoping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan for the HIA approach • Identify the health areas that will be examined
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and characterize the potential effects (both positive and negative) that are likely to be associated with the project
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategies to increase health benefits and decrease harms
Evaluation & Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure the effectiveness of the HIA and its recommendations • Track health changes over time

ASSESSMENT STEPS:

1. COMMUNITY PROFILE
2. GATHER EVIDENCE
3. CHARACTERIZE IMPACTS
4. VALUATION OF HEALTH IMPACTS