



January 21, 2011

Dear Reader:

The enclosed document, *Draft Environmental Assessment for the Norwich Cogeneration Initiative, Norwich, Connecticut*, was prepared by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) implementing regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508) and DOE NEPA implementing procedures (10 CFR Part 1021).

DOE prepared the draft EA to evaluate the potential environmental consequences of providing a grant to Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) to design, construct, and install a high-efficiency cogeneration system that would produce electricity and provide thermal energy to Atlantic City Linen Supply New England (ACLS), a large NPU customer.

DOE's proposed action is to provide a financial assistance grant of approximately \$718,000; the total cost of the proposed project would be about \$1.47 million, with NPU providing the balance of the cost. DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy believes the project would advance research and development and demonstrate energy efficiency technology.

NPU would to construct and operate a high-efficiency natural-gas-fired reciprocating engine cogeneration facility on property leased from and adjoining ACLS at 5 Consumers Avenue in the Norwich Business Park. ACLS is an industrial laundry service. The facility would generate 540 kilowatts of electricity; the residual thermal energy, in the form of a closed-loop hot water heat exchanger, would produce hot water for ACLS operations. The electricity would be transmitted by NPU's distribution system and offset electricity purchases, which would reduce costs to all customers.

The draft EA evaluates 16 resource areas and identifies no significant adverse environmental impacts for the proposed project. The proposed project could result in beneficial impacts to the nation's energy efficiency and air quality. Operation of the proposed system would generate about 4,000 megawatt-hours of electricity annually, and use natural gas very efficiently, thereby reducing the need for natural gas consumption by ACLS's existing boilers.

DOE will publish a Notice of Availability in *The Day* of New London County on January 21, 22, and 23, 2011, to announce the beginning of the 30-day public review and comment period. As stated in the notice, comments should be marked "NPU Draft EA Comments" and sent to:

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Individual names and addresses, including email addresses, which DOE receives as part of the comment process, are normally considered part of the public record. Persons who wish to withhold name, address, or other identifying information from the public record must state this request prominently at the beginning of the comment document. DOE will honor this request to the extent allowable by law. All submissions from organizations, businesses, and individuals who identify themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses will be included in the public record and open to public inspection in their entirety.

The public comment period formally begins on January 21, 2011, and ends on February 19, 2011. DOE will consider late submissions to the extent practicable. The draft EA can also be accessed from DOE's National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) website at <http://www.netl.doe.gov/publications/others/nepa/ea.html>.

Sincerely,



Joseph Zambelli
NEPA Document Manager