



The Enduring Power of Lignite

Keeping the lights on with coal

Coal is the nation's most abundant energy resource. Coal supplies about 13 percent of the power to Texas and 16 percent to the country. In addition to having power when we need it, we pay less for our electricity costs. In fact, 30 percent lower in states that rely upon coal for more than half of their electricity generation, versus states that rely on other fuels.



Lower electricity
costs



Reliable source
of energy



Advanced
environmental controls

Texas fueled by lignite coal

Texas is blessed with abundant resources, including lignite, a brownish-black coal with generally high moisture and ash content and lower heating value. It is more accessible than other types of coal because lignite seams are located relatively near the surface, eliminating the risk of methane or carbon monoxide buildup.

Texas is second in the nation in lignite production and the first in consumption, with lignite accounting for more than one-third of the coal consumed in Texas. About 23 percent of the coal-fired power plants in Texas burn lignite to generate the electricity that powers our homes and businesses.

San Miguel Electric Cooperative operates a lignite-fired power plant that provides a reliable source of power to hundreds of thousands of South Texans in 47 counties.

San Miguel Electric Cooperative is committed to maintaining a dependable power supply at the lowest possible and competitive cost to our customers, through integrity, hard work and safety.

2nd

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Texas counties served
by San Miguel



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SAN MIGUEL HAS SPENT
**HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS
OF DOLLARS**
ON ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROLS



MORE THAN
**20 STATE &
FEDERAL AGENCIES**
REGULATE TEXAS COAL & MINERAL MINING



COAL IS AN
**ABUNDANT AND READILY
AVAILABLE FUEL SOURCE**
THAT CAN MEET SPIKES IN ENERGY DEMAND

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Lignite is safe, steady and reliable

Lignite-fired power plants provide a constant, cost-effective source of reliable power. When needed, these plants can quickly generate and move power to Texas' electricity grid to meet demand. Unlike other sources of power, such as wind farms or solar cells, lignite-generated electricity does not rely on the fluctuations of Mother Nature to power Texas. Winds do not often blow at night, nor does the sun shine, but lignite coal is abundant and readily available to meet spikes in energy demand.

Environmental controls protect the public

More than 20 state and federal agencies regulate Texas coal and mineral mining operations. These laws and regulations require close monitoring of lignite mining and power generation activities in Texas to ensure they operate in a way that minimizes environmental impacts.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), the coal industry has found several ways to reduce sulfur and other impurities from coal and more effective ways of cleaning coal after it is mined.

Power plants use flue gas desulfurization equipment, also known as scrubbers, to clean sulfur from the smoke before it leaves their smokestacks. In addition, the coal industry and the U.S. government have cooperated to develop technologies that can remove impurities from coal or that can make coal more energy efficient, which reduces the amount of coal that is burned per unit of useful energy produced.

Equipment intended mainly to reduce SO₂, NOx and particulate matter can also be used to reduce mercury emissions from some types of coal. Scientists are also working on new ways to reduce mercury emissions from coal-burning power plants.

San Miguel Electric Cooperative has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on environmental controls since its power plant opened in 1982. The San Miguel power plant captures 99 percent of the particulates released by power generation. Its operations regularly meet and exceed many state and federal regulations, with its reclaimed lands earning recognition by state and local agencies.

Across the U.S., lignite-fired power plants have invested about \$2 billion in state-of-the-art technology to keep the air clean. This investment accounts for 20 to 30 percent of the cost of the typical lignite-fired power plant.

Providing power year-round

Lignite-generated electricity is abundant, low-cost, reliable and environmentally compatible. The San Miguel power plant provides an uninterrupted source of power to hundreds of thousands of people in rural South Texas – thanks to the enduring power of lignite.

Sources:

US EIA, Electricity Explained
<https://bit.ly/4huAePT>

Texas Comptroller, Energy Tour
<http://bit.ly/4jPCuD5>

About Us

San Miguel Electric Cooperative, Inc. is a member-owned mining and power generation cooperative. Our mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable power through diligent resource management, environmental stewardship and employee growth, while helping to meet needs within the communities we serve.

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