

**SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNOR**David Martin, *Cabinet Secretary*Raj Solomon, P.E., *Deputy Secretary***NEWS RELEASE****June 9, 2011****Contact:** Jim Winchester, Public Information Officer (NMENV)  
(505)222-2855 / jim.winchester@state.nm.us**NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZES CONSTRUCTION  
OF NEW TURBINE AT EL PASO ELECTRIC GENERATION FACILITY**

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMENV) has issued an air quality permit to El Paso Electric Company, authorizing the construction of a new turbine at El Paso's Rio Grande Generating Station. El Paso has indicated that they will likely shutdown one or more of the existing boilers in the future. The new turbine would replace older boilers, reducing pollution while increasing efficiency.

The authorization illustrates the New Mexico Environment Department's willingness to gather input from the public, consider careful testimony, and move quickly to make a balanced decision that will improve the infrastructure of the region.

"This permit is forward-thinking," New Mexico Environment Department Secretary David Martin said. "The new turbine will address the power needs of the area without compromising the environment." The permit will comply with all applicable state and federal requirements and protect the ambient air quality standards in the region.

NMED approved the permit after holding an extensive public process in the Sunland Park area. Following public notices by the company, NMED held a public meeting and a public hearing on March 29, at which NMED and company officials testified about the proposed turbine and the expected air quality impacts. Local residents and representatives of public interest groups testified as well.

The Rio Grande Generating Station has been in operation since the 1920s. It is comprised of three natural gas-fired boilers which provide a total annual average of 245 Megawatts of electricity. The new General Electric LMS100 natural gas-fired turbine can generate 95.3 MW of electricity. The turbine will be equipped with a selective catalytic reduction system to reduce NOx emissions and a catalytic oxidizer to reduce CO and VOC emissions.

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