

Press Release

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For Immediate Release
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Suspension of Environmental Review for Plasma Arc Gasification Facility

The Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority has received notification from Plasco Energy Group of the temporary suspension of the proposed Plasma Arc Gasification Facility project. In a letter dated October 26, 2012, Plasco requested the project be put in abeyance until there is clarification that the electricity produced would qualify as renewable energy according to California Energy Commission guidelines.

In May of this year, CalRecycle, the state agency responsible for oversight of solid waste and recycling, reversed its November 2010 determination that the Plasco proposal met the definition of gasification as stated in the Public Resources Code. Based on the initial decision, the California Energy Commission issued precertification to the Plasco project as eligible for renewal energy credits, allowing the project to be economically viable.

Plasma Arc Gasification is a technology that uses a heating process called plasma gasification to convert solid waste (garbage) into a clean gas called syngas. The syngas is then used to fuel engines to produce electricity. This conversion process would be one part of a waste recovery system designed to end the unsustainable practice of burying the 167,000 tons of local trash generated in the Salinas Valley annually.

The environmental review for the project commenced in November 2011 with the intent of producing an Environmental Impact Report which is a public document used to analyze the environmental effects of a project, to identify alternatives, and to disclose possible ways to reduce or avoid any potential environmental impacts.