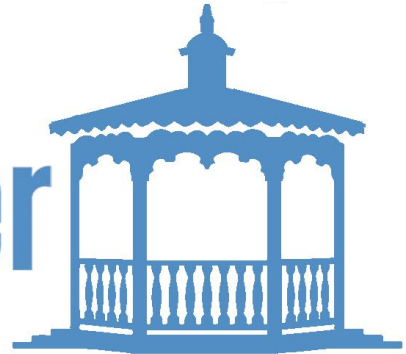


# Lexington Leader

*SERVING LEE COUNTY, TEXAS*



March 27, 2025

## TCEQ Schedules Public Meeting

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has scheduled a public meeting in Lexington about the proposed natural gas power plant slated to be built in the Blue/Adina area at the intersection of CR 309 and CR 312. At that meeting, the TCEQ and Sandow Lakes Energy (SLE) will make presentations and accept questions and comments from the public. The public meeting will be at 7 p.m., April 24 at the American Legion Hall Post 6, 304 S. Rockdale St. in Lexington.

Last week SLE published a notice from the TCEQ stating that the agency's technical review of the company's application for an air emissions permit was complete, and a draft permit had been prepared.

Anyone wishing to express comments are encouraged to attend the April 24th meeting or submit your comments online at the TCEQ website:

<https://14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment/>

When submitting comments, be sure to include one of the following permit numbers in your comments: 177380, PSDTX1650 or GHGPSDTX244.

An opinion piece, opposing SLE's proposal to build at the noted location and from receiving a final permit from the TCEQ, is published in today's paper from Move the Gas Plant. (see next page)

## Op-Ed

# It's Not a Done Deal!

## Now is Time to Sound Off to TCEQ

by Travis Brown

Last week, The Leader published a full-page public notice regarding plans by Sandow Lakes Energy (SLE) to build a massive 1,200-megawatt natural gas power plant in the Blue area. Later in the week, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) scheduled a public meeting in Lexington about the proposed power plant. At that meeting, the TCEQ and SLE will make presentations and accept questions and comments. The public meeting will be at 7 p.m., April 24 at the American Legion Hall Post 6, 304 S. Rockdale St.

The published notice from the TCEQ stated that the agency's technical review of the company's application for an air emissions permit was complete, and a draft permit has been prepared.

The Move the Gas plant steering committee urges residents of Lee County to tell the TCEQ they are opposed to SLE building its power plant in the Blue community. They can do this by coming to the public meeting and speaking out and asking questions. They can also submit written comments to the TCEQ.

The deadline for submitting written comments is the date of the meeting, April 24. Submitting comments is easy and you can do that online. Move the Gas Plant is providing instructions and suggestions for comments on the "News" page of its Website: [www. movethegasplant.org](http://www.movethegasplant.org) Or, you can go directly to the TCEQ web-page for submitting comments: <https://www14.tceq.texas.gov/epic/eComment/> This page also tells you how to submit your comments via mail or fax.

Be sure to include one of the following permit numbers in your comments: 177380, PSDTX1650 or GHGPSDTX244.

Note that the official name SLE is using for its permit application is SL Energy Power Plant I.

The location for the proposed gas plant is on a piece of Sandow Lakes Ranch property located at the intersection of CR 309 and CR 312, just west of the Adina Christian Church. We r e c o m m e n d commenters at the public meeting and in writing say they are opposed to the gas plant in part because air pollution may harm the health of rural Lee County residents. If you live in the Blue/Adina area, you might also include any personal health problems you and your family have that might be worsened by air emissions from the gas plant.

You could also express concerns about the impact of air emissions on your livestock, pets, wildlife, soils, vegetation, or visibility, and your ability to enjoy the benefits of living and working on your property.

You can also cite other negative impacts of the proposed gas plant. Those might include increased noise, lights and traffic; groundwater and surface water impacts; and decrease in property values.

The TCEQ must respond to every comment it receives.

The published public notice stated that TCEQ has made a “preliminary determination” that air emissions from the gas plant “will not violate any state or federal air quality regulations.”

Such a determination certainly does not alleviate any of our concerns about the proposed gas plant’s impact on human health, especially for those living nearby.

And such a determination does not mean this is a done deal. The executive director still must make a final approval, as do the three TCEQ commissioners.

SLE still has many hoops to jump through before it can build this gas plant.

We at Move the Gas Plant have retained an Austin law firm and have launched a legal challenge to SLE. Our law firm has requested a “contested case hearing” be conducted over the proposed air permits. In this hearing, we will be making a strong case for why SLE’s permit application should be rejected.

We are under no illusions about the difficulty of beating permits at the TCEQ. However, there are examples of other companies that decided to move their proposed gas plants to other areas after local communities mounted opposition, just as we are doing. Some people in the county have expressed support for the gas plant, citing the new property tax dollars the county would receive.

In February, the commissioner's court passed a resolution that essentially supports our position at Move the Gas Plant: this gas plant does not belong in the Blue area, but can and should be moved to a more isolated site within the sprawling Sandow Lakes Ranch, farther away from so many residences.

Some in favor of the gas plant also have cited the need for new sources of electricity for Lee County residents. But it's very likely that most, if not all, of the electricity from this plant would not go onto the state power grid. Instead that electricity likely will go to the large Bitcoin mining operations at Sandow Lakes Ranch and to other industrial facilities likely to be built there. Plus, Texas is in the process of loaning up to \$10 billion for 17 other new natural gas power plants to be built in the state.

Move the Gas Plant would like to thank Rep. Stan Gerdes and Sen. Lois Kolkhorst for agreeing last fall to our request that they ask the TCEQ to hold a public meeting.

Travis Brown lives in Blue and is on the Move the Gas Plant steering committee.