

Article - Natural Resources

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§3–303.

(a) The Secretary, in consultation with the Director of the Maryland Energy Administration and in cooperation with the Secretaries of the Environment, Agriculture, and Business and Economic Development and the Director of Planning and electric company representatives shall implement a continuing research program for electric power plant site evaluation and related environmental and land use considerations. The Secretary shall seek from additional sources recommendations for related research to be included in the program. The additional sources shall include appropriate federal and State agencies, electric companies and technical, scientific or educational institutions or organizations. The Secretary in consultation with the Director of the Maryland Energy Administration shall institute effective procedures for coordinating environmental research assignments to prevent dissipation of money, time, and effort. To this end, the State's electric companies shall be reimbursed from the Fund for environmental research specifically required to satisfy application and permit requirements for any federal, State, or local regulatory agencies, if the electric company has requested reimbursement in advance and furnishes an outline of the program and its estimated cost so that the Secretary can budget it in advance.

(b) The program shall include:

(1) General biological and ecological baseline studies, including, but not limited to, appropriate environmental studies of the biology, physics, and chemistry of the Chesapeake Bay and tributaries; sediment and biological surveys to determine and identify essential marine organism nursery areas of the State's waters, including the Chesapeake Bay and tributaries; epibenthos; bottom species; crab; finfish and human use studies;

(2) Research to assist prediction, including but not limited to experimental research, field and laboratory, and the development and provision for physical, mathematical, and biological modeling tools to assist in determining and evaluating the effects of variation of natural waters resulting from electric generating plant operations including changes in temperature, oxygen levels, salinity, biocides, radionuclides, and "heavy" metals. This research also includes collection and organization of relevant information and data necessary to operate physical, mathematical, and biological modeling tools;

(3) Provisions for monitoring operations of electric power facilities located in the State. These provisions include but are not limited to a determination of actual distribution and effect of temperature, salinity, oxygen, radionuclides, "heavy" metals, and biological effects; radiological; "heavy" metals and biocide effects; recreational and commercial fishing gains and losses; and human health and welfare effects;

(4) Research and investigations relating to effects on air resources of

electric power plants and effects of air pollutants from power plants on public health and welfare, vegetation, animals, materials, and esthetic values, including baseline studies, predictive modeling, and monitoring of the air mass at sites of proposed or operating electric generating stations, evaluation of new or improved methods for minimizing air pollution from power plants and other matters pertaining to the effect of power plants on the air environment;

(5) An environmental evaluation of electric power plant sites proposed for future development and expansion and their relationship to the waters and air of the State;

(6) Evaluation of the environmental effects of new electric power generation technologies and extraordinary systems related to power plants designed to minimize environmental effects;

(7) Determining the potential for constructive uses of waste energy to be released at proposed electric plant sites; and

(8) Analysis of the socioeconomic impact of electric power generation facilities on the land uses of the State.

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