



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH - GOVERNOR

# NEWS

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**CONTACTS:**

Abby Ottenhoff	312/814.3158
Gerardo Cardenas	312/814.3158
Rebecca Rausch	217/782.7355
Marcelyn Love (DCEO)	217/558.1542

## **Governor Blagojevich celebrates decision to locate FutureGen in Mattoon**

*Landmark clean-coal project will revolutionize nation's energy production, create thousands of jobs and bring major outside investment to Central Illinois*

MATTOON – Joined by members of the FutureGen for Illinois Taskforce, elected officials, and local residents, Governor Rod R. Blagojevich today celebrated the FutureGen Industrial Alliance's decision to build the first of its kind power plant in Mattoon. The Alliance announced at the National Press Club in Washington D.C. this morning that Illinois will be home to the \$1.4 billion FutureGen clean coal project. The announcement follows more than four years of extensive planning and preparation in Illinois.

"We are thrilled that Illinois will be home to FutureGen. This decision represents the culmination of years of hard work and dedication, and we are honored that the FutureGen Alliance and the U.S. Department of Energy have entrusted us with this groundbreaking project," Gov. Blagojevich said. "FutureGen's 'near zero-emission' coal-gasification technology holds great promise to revolutionize our nation's coal industry and ensure that coal continues to be an integral part of our energy future while reducing the greenhouse gases that cause climate change. As the entire world watches, Illinois is ready to get to work to ensure that FutureGen is a success."

FutureGen is designed to be the cleanest fossil fuel-fired power plant in the world. The coal gasification facility will convert coal into hydrogen and electricity, while capturing and safely storing the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide deep underground. It will lay the groundwork for developing similar plants around the country and the world, pioneering the capture and storage of greenhouse gases.

After a rigorous site review process, Mattoon was selected over three competing locations by the FutureGen Alliance, which is developing the facility for the U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE). The Mattoon FutureGen facility will be built on 444 acres of land located one mile northwest of the city.

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In July of 2006, the FutureGen Alliance named the cities of Mattoon and Tuscola as finalists for the project. The two other finalist cities, Jewett and Odessa, are in Texas.

Since that announcement, government and economic development leaders in Mattoon and Tuscola-Douglas County have worked hand in hand with experts from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's (DCEO) Office of Coal Development, the Illinois State Geological Survey-University of Illinois, Southern Illinois University and the Illinois Clean Coal Institute. Together they have presented a compelling case to USDOE and the Alliance that central Illinois has the best geology, infrastructure, research facilities and community support to ensure FutureGen's success.

In recent months, Governor Blagojevich also built a coalition of states supporting Illinois' bid for FutureGen. The states of Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, West Virginia and Wyoming all endorsed locating FutureGen in Mattoon or Tuscola. The Illinois Congressional delegation, led by U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, and the Illinois state legislature, also played crucial roles in securing FutureGen by working diligently in a bi-partisan fashion to ensure the FutureGen remained a national and state priority.

"The combined effort to secure FutureGen was truly a team effort. Elected officials, academics, business and labor leaders, and the environmental community all came together to make FutureGen a reality," DCEO Dir. Jack Lavin said. "Today, we are celebrating our success, but tomorrow, the real work begins. This facility will be the first of its kind in the world utilizing groundbreaking technology. This project will not only secure Illinois' reputation as a national leader in clean coal technology, but will provide an economic boon for central Illinois, bringing hundreds of new jobs to the area, and spurring economic development throughout the state.

Lavin added, "Although FutureGen will not be built in Tuscola, efforts on behalf of the site have been an important part of our winning formula. This is a win for all of central Illinois and the economic benefits will flow far and wide."

In addition to placing Illinois at the center of clean coal energy innovation and furthering the revitalization of the Illinois coal industry, FutureGen will have a significant economic impact on the region and state. According to a recent study by Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, the project will have a much larger impact than the 1,300 construction jobs and 150 permanent jobs the USDOE estimates will be created. The study showed that during the four-year construction period, there would be more than \$1 billion in economic impact statewide and 1,225 indirect and induced spin-off jobs created as a result of the economic ripple effect generated by FutureGen. Once the facility is operational, the study noted that FutureGen would generate \$135 million annually in total statewide economic output, with an \$85 million annual increase in Coles County alone. FutureGen will also create an additional 360 indirect and induced full-time jobs statewide, according to the report.

"In every step of this process we considered the possibility of victory, and yet I could not imagine it would be so sweet. This is a triumph for the region, the state and the Midwest. I am proud to be a part of this project and congratulate everyone who worked so hard to make FutureGen a reality," said Senator Gary Forby (D- Benton).

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“Today I could not be more proud to represent this victorious region. This has been a community effort from day one to prepare a site for such an innovative venture. I look forward to the next step where we make this promise of economic evolution a reality,” Senator Dale A. Righter (R-Mattoon).

“FutureGen will take us to the next level in our commitment to cleaner fuels. With this win, Illinois will be a model for the nation as an environmental leader. I thank the Governor, our Congressional delegation and the good people of central Illinois for their dedication to such an important project,” said Representative Robert F. Flider (D-Decatur).

“What a road it has been! FutureGen will bring jobs, technology, and businesses – a whole new economic vitality for this region. I thank everyone involved, and especially the hard working people of this district, without them this could not have been possible,” said Representative Chapin Rose (R-Charleston).

“This is a huge victory in that it will focus international attention on Illinois and the use of Illinois coal. Our strong coal tradition will be revitalized as we become the home of the cleanest fossil fuel-fired power plant in the world. Hopefully this is indicative of what will happen for all of Illinois, particularly Southern Illinois, in the future. I would also like to thank Governor Blagojevich and Director Lavin for their leadership on this project and Schiff Hardin, the law firm representing the FutureGen Alliance, for their help advising us on the necessary FutureGen legislation,” said Representative Kurt Granberg (D-Mt. Vernon).

“After years of research, development, and hard work, Illinois is the proud home of FutureGen. The Governor, our Congressional delegation and Illinois workers and businesses have all given unwavering support as they worked together for this common goal. I am proud of Southern Illinois University's commitment to this worthwhile clean coal project. And today we celebrate - it doesn't stop here,” said President Poshard of SIU Carbondale.

The \$1.5 billion FutureGen project, a government-private partnership, will build of a near-zero emission, integrated gasification combined cycle power plant that will capture and store 90 percent of the plant's carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions. By sequestering the CO<sub>2</sub> in deep geological reservoirs more than one mile underground in the Mt. Simon Sandstone reservoir, emissions of this greenhouse gas to the atmosphere are eliminated, avoiding the global climate change impacts of the CO<sub>2</sub>. FutureGen will be a first-of-its-kind facility to fully integrate carbon sequestration while also eliminating many of the other emissions associated with coal use in conventional coal-fueled power plants. It will be a world-class research facility that will greatly expand our understanding of clean coal technology and of carbon sequestration to avoid global climate change. The deep Mt. Simon has performed well as a natural gas storage reservoir in Illinois, and scientists expect the same for performance for CO<sub>2</sub> storage at Mattoon.

Construction of the project is expected to begin in 2010, with full-scale operations beginning in 2013.

For more information on FutureGen, please visit [www.FutureGenForIllinois.com](http://www.FutureGenForIllinois.com).

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