

Gary Advocates for Responsible Development Gary

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FULCRUM PLANT: BAD IDEA; BAD FOR GARY

A new report released today by Gary Advocates for Responsible Development (GARD) concludes that waste-to-fuel plants like the one proposed for Gary by Fulcrum Bioenergy have a track record of failure, are bad for the environment, and create toxic chemical hazards.

Fulcrum Bioenergy proposes to build a facility on Gary's Lake Michigan shoreline using an unproven process that has failed elsewhere and, if it were to become operational, will bring more pollution to an environmental justice community that is already overburdened by pollution. Fulcrum Centerpoint will be built with 500 million dollars worth of tax free revenue bonds issued by the Indiana Finance Authority.

"Gary needs investments in businesses that will contribute to sustainable economic development that will create clean jobs and green jobs, not polluters that hide behind company PR "greenwashing" campaigns," said Kimmie Gordon, GARD.

GARD has appealed IDEM's air and construction permit for Fulcrum Centerpoint to the Indiana Office of Environmental Adjudication.

Key findings of the report, *Why Fulcrum is a Bad Deal for Gary*, include:

The technology Fulcrum proposes to use has failed elsewhere. Though companies have been attempting to convert municipal waste streams into fuel since the 1970s, no company in the world has produced fuel from waste on a commercial scale, let alone fuel that meets strict aviation fuel standards. And, in fact, the technology Fulcrum proposes has a long history of failure in Europe.

Fulcrum's claims about its process are false. Fulcrum claims it has "developed and is operating a proprietary, patented, and proven process for turning waste into net zero carbon transportation fuels." This is false.

- Fulcrum's only other plant, the Sierra BioFuels plant located in the Nevada desert only began operating in May and has yet to produce and sell any fuel.
- Fulcrum touts several similar plants on its website, but none have produced fuel on a commercial scale.
- According to the Civil Aviation Organization, only eight alternative aviation fuel production routes are currently permitted, and gasification (the process Fulcrum will use) of municipal or solid waste is not on the list.

Fulcrum's process will pollute. Processing any kind of waste through the process Fulcrum proposes (gasification) produces pollution. In addition, Fulcrum estimates that 30% of the waste it will process will be plastic. Most plastics contain numerous toxic chemical additives. Many of these additives have serious health consequences

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and are linked to increased risk of cancers, fertility problems and developmental problems in children. These additives will either be emitted, contaminate the fuels produced, or become part of a hazardous waste stream.

Fulcrum means more waste coming into Gary. It takes enormous amounts of garbage to produce even a small amount of fuel. Fulcrum estimates that their process will require 100 to 120 trucks to travel to Gary from Chicago or Indiana every day.

Fulcrum's claim that it will produce "net zero carbon fuel" is false. The "net zero carbon" claim is designed simply to put a green face on a polluting project. Fulcrum never provides data to back up this demonstrably false claim. It takes an enormous amount of energy to sort waste, transport it to the plant, conduct the proposed gasification process Fulcrum proposes, convert the output of that process to fuel, and capture and handle the hazardous waste produced. Additionally, the fuel, if ever actually produced, will ultimately emit carbon dioxide when burned.

GARD commissioned *Fulcrum is a Bad Deal for Gary* in order to evaluate the process Fulcrum proposes and the claims it makes. It is a compilation of publicly available reports, news articles, and other scientific literature.

"When you add up the false claims, the company's lack of transparency, the toxic pollution hazard, and the failures of this process worldwide, you have to ask yourself what this company is up to. There is one thing we can be sure of: what they are telling us is not what we are going to get. There are too many unknowns and the risks of going forward are too great. GARD and supporters don't want this Mistake on the Lake on our lakefront that will negatively impact our environmental justice community, our natural resources, and Lake Michigan," said Dorreen Carey, GARD.

GARD said several next steps should be taken:

- IDEM should go back to the drawing board and research the documented failures and other problems with trash-to-fuel facilities like Fulcrum. Instead of taking the company's claims at face value they should consider how their permitting decisions will impact this community's current and future health and sustainability.
- IDEM should withdraw Centerpoint's permit based on GARD's appeal.
- State and local elected officials and decision-makers should further investigate the validity of the undocumented claims made by Fulcrum, and reconsider their support for the project, taking into account the long term damage to our community and our lakefront that constructing this facility can cause. They are encouraged to share this report with their constituents, publicly oppose the plant, and work with GARD to educate the public about the problems with waste to fuel projects.
- We further ask our local officials to engage with Gary residents to identify what types of economic development would be protective of our health and our environment.
- We ask the public to review this report and join GARD in opposition. There have not been any actual fact finding efforts on the part of our state and local agencies and decision makers to verify the company's unsubstantiated claims. The public needs to help take on this role and spread the word.

GARD also announced that it will hold an Environmental Justice Forum on November 12, 2022. Save the date.

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