Dear Neighbor:

As one of the nation’s leading energy companies, FirstEnergy is committed to protecting the environment, while meeting Ohio’s need for reliable and affordable electricity. Over the past 20 years, we have been a national leader in efforts to develop new technologies to reduce emissions from coal-fired power plants. Some of these research projects have led to the development of widely-used technologies that remove sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and mercury from power plants.

We are pleased to let you know that the R.E. Burger Plant in Shadyside will soon be the site of one such industry-sponsored research project for what is called carbon sequestration. For this, carbon dioxide (CO$_2$) will be injected thousands of feet below the earth’s surface for permanent storage in rock layers infused with salty water to lock CO$_2$ into geologic structures deep underground. You might recognize CO$_2$ as the common gas we all exhale, but it is released at higher amounts during the combustion process and climate change concerns -- what many call “global warming”-- are based on the belief that CO$_2$ and other “greenhouse gases” could affect the environment. Since CO$_2$ is one of the most common greenhouse gases, the ongoing debate surrounding global warming may lead to new emission requirements for CO$_2$ in the future.

The project now underway at the Burger Plant is part of a multi-year research program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy in seven regions of the country – with Ohio being part of the Midwest Regional Carbon Sequestration Partnership (MRCSP). Over the past two years, the partnership has collected data about the geology in the region. These studies indicate that the rock formations under the Burger Plant include porous sandstone layers thousands of feet below the surface with very dense cap rock lying above. These conditions potentially could be well-suited for safely storing CO$_2$ as the technology is developed, if confirmed during the planned investigations.

Over the next four to six months, MRCSP will conduct additional studies at the Burger Plant to confirm its suitability for sequestration. Beginning in early May, you may see survey crews and “seismic” trucks in the area taking measurements, which then can be analyzed to determine the potential suitability of the area for carbon sequestration. If the testing results are favorable, we’ll begin the permitting process needed to drill a test well on the Burger Plant property. The test well will reach a depth of between 4,000 to 7,000 feet – considerably below drinking water supplies which typically are found at about 100 feet in this region. Once the drilling is complete and all regulatory requirements met, we would begin injecting a small amount of CO$_2$ into the well. This will be less than the amount of CO$_2$ emitted over a two-day period of typical Burger Plant operations. We will monitor the results.

We believe specific targets for CO$_2$ reductions to address global climate change should be driven by proven, commercially available technologies. This project is one of about 25 that are being planned across the country to test the commercial viability of carbon sequestration as a CO$_2$ storage method.

The attached fact sheet provides more information about this project. You also may go to the MRCSP Web site at www.mrcsp.org. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact FirstEnergy’s R.E. Burger Plant at 740-671-1888.

Thank you.