



### **Action Alert**

The Public Service Commission (PSC) is hosting [public hearing periods](#) regarding the Paris RICE gas project. **The Public hearings periods are February 5th at 2:00pm and 6:00pm.** The PSC's role is to regulate Wisconsin utilities to ensure affordable energy bills and protect the public. **Please join us and our partners in providing testimony and filling the room in opposition to this proposal.**

**What are they proposing?** The [Paris project](#) is a 130 MW methane gas plant in Paris (near Union Grove and Kenosha, WI) proposed by WEPCO. WEPCO is the parent company of We Energies and the [most profitable utility](#) in our state. If approved, it would be built in mid-2026 with an estimated cost of \$303.3 million.

This proposal is part of over **\$2 billion in methane gas** infrastructure currently being proposed by We Energies.

**Any comments, even if you only have time for a sentence or two, are helpful and impactful!**

[Click for a comment tool with a pre-written message](#)

[Click here for the blank PSC comment form](#)

**Save the date for the public hearing on the Paris project (Docket # 6630-CE-316):**  
February 5, 2025, at 2 pm and 6 pm in person in Union Grove or online via Zoom.

[RSVP for the February 5th, 2:00 pm Paris Gas Plant Hearing](#)

[RSVP for the February 5th, 6:00 pm Paris Gas Plant hearing](#)

[RSVP for Pizza and Testimony Prep](#)

**LET'S PROTECT  
PUBLIC HEALTH  
OVER  
CORPORATE WEALTH**

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**Example Comment:**

*“As a concerned [citizen/healthcare professional/parent...] I ask that the Public Service Commission deny the Paris Gas Plant. Methane gas has negative effects on community health and the climate. Several reliable and cheaper options should be maximized, including energy efficiency, demand response, and renewable energy.*

*This gas plant will make people sick, especially young children in nearby communities. Methane gas use has been shown to increase health harms such as cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, as well as cancer, kidney, and neurodevelopmental disorders. Fossil fuel power plants have been directly linked to higher rates of asthma, negative outcomes for fetus and infant health, and early death.*

*Methane gas use also worsens climate change and associated extreme weather events, which have already caused grid outages across our state and rising repair costs that impact utility bills. Climate change threatens Wisconsin’s economy and is “the single biggest health threat facing humanity,” according to the World Health Organization.*

*Using energy efficiency and renewable energy sources could meet our energy needs while bringing quality jobs to our communities and decreasing strain on our environment and health. Please fulfill your obligation to protect the public and provide safe and affordable energy by denying the Paris Gas Plant.”*

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**More Talking Points**

**Due to the numerous negative impacts associated with methane gas facilities, we are asking that the PSC deny the Paris Gas Plant proposal.**

**The Solution: Deny the Project. We Have Better, Safer, and Cheaper Options.**

- WEPCO, or We Energies, ignored safer, cheaper alternatives such as demand response, energy efficiency, and renewable sources that can meet our energy needs with fewer public health impacts. These alternatives provide safe, [cost-effective](#), and

[reliable](#) energy, as opposed to gas plants which have been found to be disproportionately [vulnerable to failure](#) during severe weather.

- We Energies stated that 'resource diversity' was one of their primary reasons to build this project, but as of 2023, We Energies generated nearly a [third of its power from natural gas, a third from coal, and a third from nuclear, while utilizing only 0.2% solar and 2.4% wind](#). A true commitment to resource diversification would require a rapid expansion of renewable energy, but We Energies artificially limited the role of wind and solar in their alternative models for this case.
- We Energies is trying to rush through this buildout to increase shareholder profits while offloading risks onto customers. They've claimed that this powerplant is necessary due to anticipated energy use from a new AI center. But they've provided no proof that this energy demand will materialize, and even if it does, Wisconsin families shouldn't have to foot the bill for a large, wealthy corporation. We can't afford another situation like [Foxconn](#). It is unacceptable and irresponsible to build a project that harms health, worsens climate change, and could raise utility bills for working families with no assurances or accountability. It is the Public Service Commission's job to protect consumers, public health, and the environment and that means denying this plant.

### Health Harms

- The Paris RICE methane gas plant will cause [\\$26.4-\\$47.4 million in health costs](#) each year.
  - The pollution emitted during the lifetime of this facility will cause approximately [48-87 premature deaths, 165 cases of asthma, 27 heart attacks, and 54](#) emergency room visits according to widely used EPA and public health models.
- We know this plant will have numerous negative health impacts. From [extraction](#) to [combustion](#), [fossil \(methane\) gas contributes to increased health harms](#): cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, cancer, kidney disorders, neurodevelopmental disorders such as Alzheimer's, [cognitive and behavioral issues](#), and [lower academic performance](#). [Air pollution can negatively affect almost every organ](#) system, including the kidneys, lungs, heart, and brain, and [it contributes to](#) low birth weight, miscarriages, and increased infant mortality. Ultimately, air quality is a [leading risk factor for early death](#) and [early deaths](#) from burning natural gas have already surpassed deaths from coal in 19 states.
  - [National Institutes of Health research](#) shows those living in a zip code with a fuel-fired power plant experience asthma hospitalization rates 11% higher, respiratory infections rates 15% higher, and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) rates up 17% higher than demographically similar zip codes with no power plant.
- A study [of the Wisconsin energy system](#) demonstrated that in-state clean energy production is not only possible, but it would prevent over 85,000 asthma and respiratory

cases and 2,000 premature deaths every year- culminating in a total of \$21 billion in annual health savings for Wisconsin families while growing Wisconsin GDP by 5%.

- Medical research shows there is [no safe level](#) of particulate matter for human health.

### Energy Burden, Higher Utility Costs, and Social costs

- Building an expensive gas plant, like Paris, is a risky investment. Wisconsin families are already struggling to afford high utility bills, which were recently raised due in part to WEPCO's ill-advised billion-dollar investment in the Oak Creek Coal plant. At the time, the same groups standing up against this current proposal warned that the writing was on a wall and that clean energy was a better path forward. Their warnings were ignored at the time by decision-makers, but they were correct.
  - That plant is now a [stranded asset](#). That means that customers are paying for it, even though it is no longer providing electricity to them. To make matters more unjust, since utilities reap a set profit off of all investments- WEPCO is still making profits of that very same coal plant. It is the PSC's job to protect customers and Commissioners should be exceedingly cautious about additional fossil fuel investments that carry a similar risk. Wisconsinites deserve affordable, reliable electricity, not a [windfall for power company shareholders](#).
- We Energies has the highest percentage of customers who are energy-burdened, are behind in payments, and have had their energy shut off more than any other utility in Wisconsin. Research shows that energy burden is a social determinant of health. It was more influential on premature mortality, self-reported health, and life expectancy, than food and healthcare access ([Reames et al., 2021](#)).

### Climate Impacts

- Methane gas projects have been consistently documented as having increasingly negative effects on the climate.
  - The extreme weather events we're already experiencing -- including historic droughts and floods, superstorms, record-breaking wildfires, and heat -- will continue to worsen unless we cut greenhouse gas emissions rapidly. These extreme weather events damage our quality of life, housing, the economy, and increase utility outages (reliability) and costs when infrastructure is damaged.
  - In 2021, the [World Health Organization](#) declared climate change to be "the single biggest health threat facing humanity."
- The Governor's Task Force on Climate Change explicitly suggests to "avoid all new fossil fuel infrastructure for electricity generation" and "avoid any new natural gas plants."
  - [Internal memos show](#) that fossil fuel companies are aware of scientific evidence suggesting that the lifecycle emissions from 'natural' gas may be equal to those from coal. Gas is not a climate solution and this plant is an example of building new fossil fuel infrastructure that will lock us into decades of dangerous emissions.

- According to the project applications, the proposed Paris facility would emit about [591,000 tons of CO2e annually](#), but that number does not include methane leaks, an extremely potent greenhouse gas.