

Dear Lisaida Archuleta,

It is vital for all city and county residents to be publicly informed of and understand the dangers of the proposed AES battery storage facility/solar farm with approximately 550,000 batteries in the middle of three large residential areas, the community college, elementary schools, the penitentiary, etc. AES has had three lithium-ion battery fires at their facilities within the last five years. These fires produce extremely toxic smoke, can cause explosions and cannot be extinguished. They must be allowed to burn themselves out, taking several days or even weeks. Sparks from these fires could easily start a wildfire that would spread rapidly in our windy climate. The hazardous chemicals in the smoke will go whichever direction the wind blows. Vast amounts of our priceless water must be used to cool adjacent areas. This water will be contaminated with “forever chemicals” (as will our land) and will seep into our aquifer. These kinds of incidents will likely cause evacuations or shelter-in-place orders for all the surrounding areas. The only way to evacuate the Eldorado area’s 2700 homes is to one road, Highway 285. Where would the residents go if they were even able to get to 285? Where would they send the prisoners from the state penitentiary? If a shelter-in-place order is given, you must close windows and doors and turn off any venting and air conditioning. Nobody would be able to survive that in the summer heat. These facilities are meant to last approximately 35 years, so multiple events are possible. AES has been fined over \$40 million for environmental damage and other violations. To me, that shows a lack of corporate ethical standards. AES will make lots of money while all Santa Feans will live with lots of risks. Lithium batteries are not safe and are definitely not “green.”

Our county fire departments are mostly staffed with volunteers. I appreciate the great work they do to protect us all. However, they are not equipped nor trained to handle this kind of major incident, nor is it fair to have them exposed to these dangerous toxins at extremely high levels. I have heard it would take them at least 20 – 30 minutes to arrive on scene, in which time major problems can occur. Who will be required to pay for the equipment and training needed?

The Sustainable Land Development Code (SLDC) contains many references to protecting citizens, the environment, conservation, high regard for the protection of individual property rights, minimizing environmental impacts, conserving natural resources, enhancing the quality of life and to promote the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the surrounding properties. Many insurance companies are drastically raising their rates because of the wildfire risks we already live with. Some are no longer doing business in the county. What will the dangers from this facility do to our premiums if we will even be able to get insurance? AES sent a report stating that this facility will not impact property

values in the area. I disagree. Would you want to live next to these potential dangers? I certainly do not want to live anywhere near this project and feel I am being forced from my home for my own safety because of bad decisions by our county leaders who should be doing their job to protect the residents and the environment. This project will also require a 2.5-mile-long high voltage power line to be built to connect to PNM. It will cross many residents' views and be visible from miles away, which does not protect the "scenic vistas" described in section 1.5-3 of the SLDC. We also know that these high voltage transmission lines can cause devastation, as seen in Hawaii.

I understand we need solar and wind power to avoid using fossil fuels for energy production and it can and **must** be done with safety as the first priority. This project is not in a safe nor reasonable location for protecting the residents and environment. I am very frustrated that the health and welfare of the residents and the environment are being ignored so that a big corporation can come to this county (and even the entire state) and destroy the livability of New Mexico. We need to have strong regulations that protect all citizens and the environment **before** allowing any of these kinds of installations to be approved.

I wonder if the appropriate due diligence is being done in researching the hazards of placing these extremely toxic batteries in the proposed location. I have read articles that state that lithium-ion batteries emit forever chemicals just by being "in use." It is even worse if they catch fire, experience thermal runaway and/or explode. I have attended most of the meetings regarding this project and have **not heard any** care, concern nor information from county representatives about the health issues (cancer, liver and kidney disease, fertility issues and many more) that residents in the surrounding areas will be exposed to. I am appalled that Santa Fe County is seriously considering locating this utility-scale monster anywhere near residential areas. New Mexico has millions of acres of empty land that would be much more suitable to locate this installation if it is deemed necessary at all, given that the forever chemicals will be dispersed at any location and cause great harm to any environment. Are any county representatives even thinking of these risks, the costs involved in cleaning up potential disasters from lithium batteries, the illnesses people may suffer from these toxic chemicals, not to mention the probable lawsuits from these dangers? Have residents been informed that there will be industrial revenue bonds to pay for this and that their property taxes will increase by unknown amounts?

I urge all Santa Fe County representatives to reject this dangerous utility-scale lithium-ion battery installation at the proposed location and hope they understand the irreparable damage that will unfold if it is allowed.

Sincerely,

Nancy Peterson, Eldorado resident