

IEPA Director meets with Madison County Energy Advisory Board

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Improved Communications and Expedited Permit Process Addressed

EDWARDSVILLE – Madison County Chairman Alan J. Dunstan and Illinois Senator William Haine recently brought together the director of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), Alec Messina, with members of the Madison County Energy Advisory Board to address issues affecting the county and its energy providers.

Opening the meeting at the National Corn-to-Ethanol Research Center on the campus of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE), Dunstan cited the importance of

establishing open lines of communication with the IEPA. “The energy sector is particularly important to the people of Madison County, providing needed services and jobs. It is essential the county’s energy providers have improved communications with and timely decisions from the IEPA.”

“We appreciate the important, and occasionally difficult, role the IEPA has in protecting our environment and our citizens,” Dunstan continued. “We asked Director Messina to join us to discuss improving accessibility to IEPA officials and how we might expedite routine permitting issues that impact our businesses and, ultimately, our residents.”

“I appreciate the offer from Chairman Dunstan and Senator Haine to meet with you today because it is important for me to know what issues you have with the IEPA and how we can effectively address them,” Messina said.

Sen. Haine said that under Messina’s direction, the IEPA has shown significant improvement. “Despite the lack of a state budget, which severely hampers the ability of the IEPA and other state agencies to serve the people of Illinois, Alec (Messina) has improved the IEPA operation. I appreciate his willingness to meet with the advisory board members so the issues that exist can be resolved.”



During an open dialog with the members of the Energy Advisory Board, Messina agreed there is a need for improved communications. “We (the IEPA) need to improve communications and we have been working on that. At the same time, it is important that we know ahead of time what projects are on the drawing board so we can plan accordingly. I believe this would be beneficial to everyone.”

The IEPA is currently operating with a reduced staff, a fact Messina did not use as an excuse but as one of the reasons why it is important for the agency and energy providers to work together.

Messina also stated the agency has been working toward an expedited permitting process that will alleviate many of the issues cited by advisory board members.

Then Madison County Energy Board was established by Dunstan to provide counsel and assist the county in developing and implementing energy strategies, and to protect existing businesses and jobs in the energy sector. Dunstan said the county is working to assist businesses which refine, generate or distribute energy with the navigation of the myriad of laws and regulations affecting the industry.

Members of the Madison County Energy Advisory Board include Melissa Erker (chairwoman), Phillips 66 Wood River Refinery; Jim Potje, Ameren Illinois; Andrew Jones, Southwestern Electric Cooperative; Don Vichitvongsa, SunCoke Energy; Bradley Ross, Abengoa Bioenergy; Courtney Breckenridge, NCERC at SIUE; Matt Schrimpf, HWRT Oil Co., LLC; Kevin Conner, Linde LLC; and Dan Cook, City of Highland Light & Power.

