

Portage Des Sioux Power Plant Grabs Attention With Extra Smoke, But No Worries, Just Added Water Vapor

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PORTAGE DES SIOUX - The AmerenUE Sioux Power Plant in Portage Des Sioux is always a fascination for residents across the Mississippi River in Alton and Grafton. On Tuesday, the operation caught the attention of some residents with extra smoke pouring out of the plant smokestacks.

Thankfully, Brad Brown, an Ameren Communications representative reports all is good at the plant.

“On Wednesday, we were using an auxiliary steam boiler to start up one of the generators, which was likely the cause of the extra ‘smoke,’” he said. “It was actually water vapor.”

The power plant uses tire chips, petroleum coke, and coal. Sioux can burn in excess of 20,000 tons of tire chips annually — the equivalent of 25,000 tons of coal per year — providing electricity for more than 4,000 residential customers. This consumes more than 2.5 million discarded used tires a year. Sioux's maximum burn is 12,000 tons of coal over 24 hours—3.0 million tons of coal annually.

Union Electric's Sioux Power Plant accomplished many industry firsts:

Pioneered slag-removal techniques now used nationwide.

One of the first to install cyclone furnaces that can burn multiple fuels.

One of the first to receive coal on the unit train concept.

Became the first generating plant in Missouri to burn chipped rubber tires to augment coal as an alternate fuel source.