

Opposition to PurGen welcome

http://www.pressofatlanticcity.com/opinion/letters/article_5c73ab86-11ab-5d29-bfe4-8fff114bc4c5.html

Posted: Thursday, November 18, 2010

Atlantic City on Nov. 10 became the first municipality in New Jersey to oppose the Linden-based PurGen project to pump carbon dioxide into the water off the coast of Atlantic City. The project, which proposes to pump liquified carbon into holes under the ocean off our coastline, could have serious negative impacts for our area's environment and tourism. It is an experiment we don't need off of our coastline.

In 1972, a similar proposal to experiment with floating nuclear power plants off the Brigantine coastline was proposed by a large corporation. As president of the Atlantic County Citizen Council for the Environment, I opposed that project on the grounds that the technology was unsafe and unproven. It was canceled because the city of Atlantic City and the state of New Jersey supported the opposition.

In this case, the concept of sequestering concentrated liquid carbon dioxide in underwater caverns for eternity is completely untested. Our oceans are currently under enormous assault already by carbon dioxide in the atmosphere from the burning of fossil fuels. The carbon descends into our seas, creating acidity levels not seen in human history. The effects have been to create dead zones, devastating microbial growth that is the base of the food chain for most sea life and the producer of much of our oxygen.

As far as the effects on tourism on our region, one only need to reflect back on the 1980s, when medical waste washed up on the New Jersey shores and tourists stopped visiting many of our resorts because of the perception of an unclean sea. Using our coastline as a waste depository would not help the image of our oceans as a clean and safe place to visit.

JOEL S. FOGEL

President

Waterwatch International

Somers Point