

DEC signs pact with Fairbanks utility system

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation has signed an agreement with the Fairbanks Municipal Utility System to bring the Chena 1, 2 and 3 coal-fired boilers into compliance with state air quality regulations.

"Once all the requirements of the agreement are in place, Fairbanks residents will benefit from a cleaner,

as well as more efficient, source of steam heat for the city," said Bill Ross, outgoing DEC commissioner.

The agreement specifies that the MUS must meet state air quality standards in the short term by reducing steam production rates to 50 percent in the Chena 1 and 2 boilers, and cease operation of the Chena 3 boiler except during emergency conditions.

"The compliance order contains provisions which will require the MUS to notify DEC in a declared emergency and allow operation of their boilers at the old plant when they have operating problems," Ross said.

To improve air quality in the long term and achieve compliance, the DEC/MUS agreement requires the utility to update its electrical system master plan by February 1987 and to

install a steam intertie line to the new plant no later than Nov. 7, 1987.

Ross said Fairbanks officials have been working closely and cooperatively with DEC to reach the agreement and achieve air quality standards.

"The improvement in the air quality that this order will achieve has long been needed, and the cooperation we've received from the MUS is appreciated," he said.