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No to BESS in San Juan Capistrano!

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As a San Juan Capistrano resident, I urge you to consider the risks associated with a battery storage facility in the proposed location. It cannot be legal or moral to expose so many citizens, animals, nature, and our firefighters to the potential hazards of BESS.

I wonder why BESS cannot be constructed in a less populated area. Why in the middle of a city, close to schools, residential areas, fragile coastal areas, and frequently congested freeways?

Fires in large-scale accumulator storage systems are not uncommon and include the following:

"Between 2017 and 2019 South Korea witnessed 23 major fires, with total damages upwards of \$32 million.

Europe has already witnessed two major fires, in Belgium in 2017, and Liverpool, England in 2020.

In the U.S., a serious fire in 2019 claimed the lives of two firefighters at a 20 MW facility consisting of three modular battery containers and a switchgear container that has been in operation since 2018.

In Beijing, in April 2021 a fire broke out in a 25 MWh energy storage facility using lithium iron phosphate batteries.

In Victoria, Australia, one of the world's largest storage facilities with a capacity of 300 MW/450 MWh in August 2021 a lithium-ion battery module caught fire during a test. The fire took three days to extinguish as the firefighters' tactics were limited to cooling the outside of the containers to prevent the fire from spreading. Around 150 firefighters and 30 vehicles were deployed to fight the fire. The fire started in a 13-ton module with a capacity of 3 MWh, which was housed in a container about 15 meters long, and then spread to an adjacent container.

In California in September 2021, damage occurred at what is currently the world's largest battery storage facility when several lithium-ion battery modules overheated."

And, let's not forget the recent Olay Mesa fire in California on May 14, 2024. (<https://www.genre.com/us/knowledge/publications/2021/october/pmint21-3-en>)

The following is a passage from Energy Storage System Safety Wisconsin PUC

Workshop:

Impact of a Lithium-Ion Fire on Adjacent Populations:

"In general, as we understand currently, the smoke from a lithium-ion battery fire is as toxic to human health as a fire in a similar mass of common plastics. However, sometimes the safest/best firefighter response to a propagating battery fire is to simply let the fire consume the active material, thereby dissipating the stored energy while protecting nearby structures.

This may mean that a battery fire will produce smoke for a longer duration than fires in plastics. As toxic impact to human health is based on both severity and duration of exposure a battery fire in a neighborhood could have a greater impact than a fire in a comparable mass of plastics.

Because of this, it is recommended that the siting policy consider the smoke produced during the conflagration, whether generated by thermal runaway or external fire, and the population potentially exposed to the smoke.

This consideration impacts dual-occupancy structures, locations where evacuation options are limited, and location proximity to vulnerable populations such as schools or elderly care facilities."

https://energy.sandia.gov/wpcontent/uploads/2021/12/4_Rosewater_David_SNL_WIPSC_Session4_6-9-21.pdf

Thank you for your time.
Solange Klingensmith