Pressure by labor group alleged

Fearing retaliation, Roseville signs with union organization.

By Dale Kasler
BEE STAFF WRITER

It was July 21, the mercury had hit 101, electricity usage was soaring—and the Roseville City Council was getting steamed.

Eager to press ahead with a $150 million power plant that would enhance Roseville's energy independence, council members were confronted with a knotty problem. City officials were urging them to sign a "project labor agreement" assuring the plant would be built with union labor.

Council members feared that could inflate construction costs, but city officials said rejecting the deal posed greater risks: A powerful labor group, California Unions for Reliable Energy, would try to delay licensing for the gas-fired plant by raising environmental objections. Smudging CURE could cost $15 million in extra red tape and other costs and put the project 18 months behind schedule.

The choice wasn't easy.

"Do I stand on principle and refuse to be greenmailed...or do I make the logical business decision that is in the best interests of the people of Roseville?" council member Jim Gray asked. He then

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CURE: Group says its stands are for environment

"They added costs and significantly delayed (an Imperial County) geothermal project, and the reasoning has little to do with the environment."

V. Jade White
Santa Clara High

CURE: Group says its stands are for environment

A story appeared in the Los Angeles Times this week that should concern all Californians. The story was about "CURE," a group formed by a coalition of environmentalists and labor unions to prevent the construction of a geothermal power plant in Imperial County. The group, known as CURE, has been successful in delaying the project for several years, and the story suggests that their efforts are having an impact on the California energy market.

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