

Town Hall and VA Register notice

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Withdrawal of Proposed Local Variance for Data Centers Located in Loudoun County

In response to public comment, a proposed variance for data centers located in Loudoun County was withdrawn by the Department on April 12, 2023. The original public comment period was opened on January 26 and extended from March 6 through April 21, with a public hearing held on April 6, 2023. Therefore, no decision or announcement of a decision on the proposed variance is necessary, and the comment period is now closed effective immediately.

DEQ is cancelling the public notice and not moving forward at this time with the consideration of an issuance of an order granting a temporary local variance for data centers located in Loudoun County. As stated in the initial public notice and draft order, the proposal was meant to address a concern for the area in which there may not be a sufficient amount of electricity for data centers due to severe, localized constraints in electricity transmissions through 2025. The proposal was intended to be an option to allow the data centers to continue to serve their customers, maintain the integrity of internet, and alleviate demand on the electric grid during periods of extreme stress. Given further discussion with stakeholders and public comment on the proposal, DEQ believes that these issues are now being addressed between the data centers, the utilities, and the regional transmission organization (PJM interconnect). If needed in the future, DEQ stands ready to assist in ensuring that Virginians have a reliable, affordable, clean, and growing supply of energy.

Contact Information: Karen G. Sabasteanski, Office of Air Data Analysis and Planning, Department of Environmental Quality, PO Box 1105, Richmond, VA 23218 (phone 804-659-1973, fax 804-698-4510, email karen.sabasteanski@deq.virginia.gov).