

The Ask — Your Insurance Policy

A letter asking that conditions be made binding, for any county facing a data center

HOW TO USE THIS: everything in [square brackets] is for you to replace. Delete any item that does not apply to your situation — a shorter letter that means every word beats a long one that doesn't. Laws differ by state; where a statute is cited, check your own state's equivalent before you send it.

Asking for conditions is not saying yes. It is insurance. You don't buy fire insurance because you want your house to burn down. You buy it so that if it does, you don't lose everything. If your county votes yes over your objections, these conditions decide how bad it gets.

Send it BEFORE the planning commission votes, and ask that every item be written into the approval as a binding condition. You get zero of what you don't ask for.

Be honest about the heat

None of these conditions makes a data center and gas plant safe for the farms around it. Reusing heat helps most in winter. But July and August are when corn needs cool nights most, while it fills its kernels, and those same hot weeks are hardest on bulls. That is when there is the least use for extra heat. The best summer protections are distance and windbreaks, heat sent up high through tall stacks so it doesn't pool over fields on still nights, and dry cooling so nights don't turn muggy for cattle. These conditions make the best of a terrible situation. That is why the answer stays no.

Saying this in your letter costs you nothing and makes everything else you say more credible.

THE LETTER

To the [County] Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners:

Re: [project name or case number]

MY ANSWER IS STILL NO. IF YOU VOTE YES ANYWAY, THIS IS MY INSURANCE POLICY.

My answer, and my neighbors' answer, is still no. But asking is not agreeing. If this county votes yes anyway, I ask that every item below be written into the approval as a binding condition — through zoning conditions, a development agreement, or both — before any vote, with dates, dollar amounts, penalties and public reporting.

Please be clear about one thing: none of these conditions makes this project safe for the farms around it. [Keep or cut the honesty paragraph above — it is strong, and it is true.]

I ask for the following conditions:

1. EMF, noise and air

- Contain the EMF. Faraday shielding PLUS mu-metal or silicon steel for the 60-hertz magnetic field, gas-insulated substations, active cancellation loops, and high-voltage lines buried in a tight triangle (trefoil) inside steel conduit.
- No more than 1.0 mG added above a baseline, at any property line, home or school.
- How to test it, in three steps, so nobody can say it is untestable: (1) before construction, a county-chosen tester records fields for seven days at every property line, home and school (IEEE Std 644 methods), so the

background is already counted; (2) at startup, with equipment off, a test coil inside each shielded room makes a known field, and the shield must cut it by at least 90 percent just outside the wall; (3) at full power, and every year after, record again at the same spots.

- Vibration-absorbing layers under server racks, generators, transformers and cooling towers.
- A fence-line noise limit that includes low, tonal hum — not just regular decibels. County-owned meters.
- Catalytic controls and soot filters on every gas turbine, heat recovery on the exhaust, stack readings posted online, air monitors at schools.
- Lights shielded and pointed down, to protect the night sky.
- A county team that checks: unannounced testing, every reading on a public website, fines that grow with each violation.
- Answer us in writing first. If your county has a cost funding agreement (developer money for the county's lawyers and engineers), ask that those experts answer every condition and every point of public testimony in writing, posted before the vote, with an accounting of what the money paid for.

2. Use the waste heat, all year

- Greenhouses on the roofs, heated by waste heat, growing food for the community, schools and food pantry. No new ground used.
- Waste heat piped to schools, the hospital, homes, a public pool, grain dryers and stock tanks.
- Carbon dioxide from the gas plant fed to algae for fuel.
- Summer: absorption chillers to cool schools and the hospital, grain and hay drying, heat stored underground for winter, and dry coolers that don't evaporate local water.
- Better coolant, for example carbon nanotubes in closed-loop cooling water.
- DC power inside the buildings, to cut conversion losses.
- Solar on every roof that isn't a greenhouse, and over every parking lot.

3. Water

- All closed-loop water — first fill, every flush, every refill — trucked in. Used, chemically treated water trucked out to licensed disposal. Haul records public.
- Local water for restrooms and drinking only, in writing. If the developer says it will use "about as much as it takes to flush the toilets," ask them to sign it.
- A hard annual cap, a public online meter, no pumping in a declared drought.
- Test wells on neighbors' land, and a fund to deepen any well that drops.

4. The construction years ("man camps")

- Workforce RV housing on the developer's own site, with its own power and sewer and water hauled in.
- A fee to the county for every RV site, every night, for roads, deputies, EMS, fire and schools.
- When construction ends, the hookups go to the county — for example, a fairgrounds campground.
- Hire local first, shift-change shuttles, an on-site clinic, truck routes away from schools, a road-repair bond.

5. Farms, neighbors, money and safety

- Baseline and yearly checks of night temperatures, cattle conception and crop yields, with payment if they drop.
- A property value guarantee, native prairie and trees on unbuilt ground, berms and setbacks.

- The developer pays for all new power lines and substations, not ratepayers. Backup power for the school and hospital.
- Fire trucks, equipment and training paid for before any batteries arrive.
- A teardown (decommissioning) bond up front.
- Tax payments guaranteed in writing, even with a federal lease. An escrow for independent engineers chosen by the county. Clawbacks if promises are broken.
- Local training, apprenticeships, and funding for a public research lab.
- The name of the end user, in writing, before any vote.

Closing

I ask the county counselor to state in writing which of these can be made binding conditions, and to do so before the vote rather than after. Please include this letter in the public record.

Thank you for your time and for your service.

[Your name]

[Your township or town, and county]

[Email] • [Date]

Consider leaving your street address and phone off a letter that may be published. Your name, town and email are enough to make it a real public comment.

*From the free toolkit at immunocure.org/toolkit — companion to *The Battle for Tonganoxie* by L J Steele.*