



INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION OF NORTH DAKOTA

Doug Burgum
Governor

Drew H. Wrigley
Attorney General

Doug Goehring
Agriculture Commissioner

NEWS

May 23, 2022

North Dakota Industrial Commission approves funding for Lignite Research & Development proposal

BISMARCK - The North Dakota Industrial Commission (NDIC) awarded \$850,000 of grant funding to Semplastics for a new lignite research project on May 23, 2022. The total cost of the project is \$4.2 million with the majority of the match funding coming from the U.S. Department of Energy. Other entities involved in the project are North American Coal Corp. and the Energy & Environmental Research Center.

The purpose of the project is to make non-flammable, low-cost building materials and other components using lignite coal as the primary component. The ultimate technological impact is to provide new improved building materials out of lignite-based resources, which will provide additional markets tied to North Dakota lignite and create additional industry and associated jobs. The project includes two efforts focused on manufacturing with large 3D printers and assembling a partial building using coal-based material.

“Low-cost baseload power from North Dakota lignite remains a cornerstone of our economy and the foundation of our grid stability and resilience, and the development of diverse new uses of lignite is a critical component of optimizing use of our state’s resource,” said members of the Commission in a joint statement. “Through our state-industry partnerships, North Dakota continues to be a world leader in innovations related to energy resources.”

The Lignite Research Council recommended the grant proposal at its meeting on May 12 in Bismarck. The proposal was then advanced to the NDIC, which oversees the Lignite Research Program and consists of Gov. Doug Burgum as chairman, Attorney General Drew Wrigley, and Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring.

The Commission is a partner with the regional lignite industry in the Lignite Research Program. State dollars are leveraged with industry (mines and utilities) investments and funding from the Department of Energy for research and demonstration projects. Since 1987, when the partnership began, the state has invested more than \$90 million in lignite research funds. Total investment in more than 200-plus projects is in excess of \$750 million.

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