LG&E and KU retire Green River Station

Company closes its oldest operating coal-fired facility after more than six decades

(LOUISVILLE, Ky.) – It began powering customers across the Commonwealth before some areas even had electric service. Now after 65 years of providing safe, reliable energy, the turning of generating units at Louisville Gas and Electric Company and Kentucky Utilities Company's Green River Station has ground to a halt. The company officially retired the plant's final two units just before midnight, Sept. 30.

Hailed by Kentucky officials as "the greatest industrial innovation of the century," Green River was put into service in 1950 to help meet post-World War II energy demands. Strategically located in western Kentucky, the plant played a key role in supporting the region's dramatic economic growth by taking advantage of abundant, low-cost coal supplies in the area and serving as a critical energy hub that interconnected and supplied power to Kentucky Utilities' entire system. At the peak of its operations, the plant's four generating units combined to produce more than 250 megawatts of power.

"This plant might be a small one by today's standards, but it's also been a mighty one," said Green River Station General Manager Tom Troost. "It's met the challenge of increased demand and endured flooding, ice storms and more than six decades of service in an industry that is constantly evolving."

Throughout the decades, Green River became a pioneer in environmental protection and plant efficiency for the KU system. In 1974, it was the sight of KU's first "scrubber," which removed sulfur dioxide from Units 1 and 2; later, special burners installed on Units 3 and 4 reduced the units' nitrogen oxide emissions rates by nearly half; and continuous-emission monitoring and combustion control systems further enhanced the facility's environmental compliance efforts.

With increasing environmental mandates on coal-fired generation, Green River Units 1 and 2 were retired in 2004, reducing the plant's capacity to 163 megawatts. Units 3 and 4, which were originally scheduled to retire in 2016, are retiring ahead of schedule due to early completion of regional transmission projects to enhance electric reliability for the region and grid as a whole.

The retirement completes the least cost compliance plans, announced by the utilities in 2011, to retire 13 percent — or 800 megawatts — of the company's older, coal-fired generation as a result of stricter environmental mandates by the EPA. Tyrone Station was retired in 2013 and Cane Run Units 4, 5 and 6 were retired earlier this year.

Green River's 36 employees have the option of retiring, moving to new positions within the company or pursuing new opportunities.

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Louisville Gas and Electric Company and Kentucky Utilities Company, part of the PPL Corporation (NYSE: PPL) family of companies, are regulated utilities that serve a total of 1.2 million customers and have consistently ranked among the best companies for customer service in the United States. LG&E serves 321,000 natural gas and 400,000 electric customers in Louisville and 16 surrounding counties. Kentucky Utilities serves 543,000 customers in 77 Kentucky counties and five counties in Virginia. More information is available at www.lge-ku.com and www.pplweb.com.

For further information: For more information, call the LG&E and KU media hotline at 502–627–4999.
