

SIERRA CLUB LAUNCHES AGGRESSIVE 'DTE HURTS' ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

Billboards, print, online and University of Michigan game day ad roll-out highlight how DTE Energy hurts health, clean energy jobs and electric bills

Tuesday, October 8, 2013

Contact:

Alison Flowers, Sierra Club, 303-246-6297, alison.flowers@sierraclub.org

Brad Van Guilder, Sierra Club, 313-205-6386, brad.vanguilder@sierraclub.org

DETROIT, MI - Today outside DTE Energy headquarters, the Sierra Club Beyond Coal Michigan Campaign launched a statewide, aggressive advertising campaign against the utility. The "DTE Hurts" campaign aims to unmask DTE as one of the most coal-dependent utilities in the country and show how its actions hurt Michigan families' health and pocketbooks every day. Emissions from coal-burning plants include dangerous toxins, and pollution from these plants has the ability to trigger asthma attacks and make such conditions worse. Michigan's Wayne County – home to the River Rouge Power and Trenton Channel Plants – has the highest number of pediatric asthma cases in the state, combined with the highest state population of those living in poverty.

"No doubt, DTE's coal plants threaten our health and sicken our families by dumping dangerous chemicals into Michigan's waterways," said Jim Nash, Oakland County Water Commissioner, a featured speaker at the campaign launch. "This campaign is aptly named. DTE absolutely hurts Michigan families."

The hard-hitting [advertising roll-out](#) includes two Detroit-area billboards along highly visible commuter routes, M-39 and I-275; full-page and other print ads in the Ann Arbor News, the Detroit Free Press, the Detroit News and the Oakland Press; and online ads statewide. The ads center on the devastating health impacts of coal and tell DTE to "stop hurting Michigan families."

The Sierra Club is also pushing a clean energy message at two University of Michigan home games this fall, including this past weekend's blowout homecoming event against the University of Minnesota and an Oct. 19 game against the University of Indiana. The ads encourage Michigan to "get in the game" of clean energy jobs and not be outpaced by other states.

Volunteers are deploying to collect petitions telling DTE to clean up its act and invest in cleaner, renewable energy. One such volunteer, who spoke at today's news event is Douglas Myers, Jr., a community member from River Rouge. More than 1.6 million pounds of hazardous chemicals are released every year by the many heavy industrial facilities in River

Rouge, making DTE one of the worst environmental justice offenders, according to the NAACP.

“DTE is not the patron saint of our community, as they’d like people to believe,” said Myers. “They’re taking advantage of us, and they think they can get away with it. We’re rising up and saying, ‘no more.’”

Last week the Sierra Club’s Clean Air Act lawsuit against DTE gained momentum when a federal magistrate judge recommended the case move forward, rejecting DTE’s efforts to have the case dismissed. DTE reported to state authorities that four of its seven coal-fired plants in Michigan are responsible for 1,499 violations of the Clean Air Act between 2007 and 2011.

“This lawsuit will allow us to keep fighting for justice for the many residents who suffer the health impacts of DTE’s coal plants,” said Tiffany Hartung, Sierra Club campaign representative.

Beyond Coal Michigan is part of a the Sierra Club’s national campaign to retire old, outdated coal-burning plants and replace them with clean energy solutions.

To view samples of the “DTE Hurts” ads, click [here](#).

###