Mr. Morton Sterling, Director
Environmental Protection
Detroit Edison Company
200 Second Avenue, 482 WCB
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Dear Mr. Sterling:

This is a followup to the October 19, 1989 meeting during which Detroit Edison further discussed its position that the addition of natural gas firing capacity to the Greenwood Unit I Power Plant should not be subject to a prevention of significant deterioration (PSD) review. At the meeting, you requested that Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Headquarters review Region V's previous determination that the proposed fuel conversion was a "major modification" for PSD purposes.

As you are aware, in a letter dated December 20, 1988, EPA Region V concluded that the proposed conversion of the oil-fired Greenwood Unit to dual capacity for oil and gas firing would subject the plant to a PSD review for nitrogen oxides (NOx). The Region's conclusion was based on a determination that 1) the source was not capable of firing natural gas prior to January 6, 1975 (and therefore was not covered by the PSD exemption for modifications under 40 CFR 52.21(b)(2)(iii)(e)(1)); and 2) there wou ld be a significant net increase of NOx resulting from the change. As you have requested, we have reevaluated this finding in light of the additional information submitted by Detroit Edison during the October 19 meeting.

The information presented by Detroit Edison indicates that the emissions unit at the source was initially designed and permitted to fire both oil and gas. However, there is no evidence to demonstrate that the source as a whole had, or at any time initiated construction on, the equipment necessary to deliver natural gas to the combustion unit. Without such equipment, it would not be possible for the source to utilize natural gas as an alternate fuel. Consequently, it is our view that the source was not capable of accommodating natural gas prior to January 6, 1975. Therefore, the changes necessary to accommodate the firing of natural gas at the Greenwood Plant would, for PSD purposes, be considered a "physical change" to the source.

As requested, we have also evaluated the net emissions change at the source that would result from the modification. It is Detroit Edison's position that the large decreases in "allowable" emissions of sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, and NOx when burning natural gas rather than oil as a result of the modification, warrants special consideration. Specifically, Detroit Edison feels that the use of a cleaner fuel at the Greenwood Plant warrants a finding that there is no increase in actual emissions and accordingly no "major modification."

Under the PSD regulation, a "major modification" occurs when the physical or operational change at the source (in this case the installation of natural gas handling facilities and the firing of natural gas) would result in a significant net emissions increase for any regulated pollutant at the source. Whether the proposed use of natural gas at the Greenwood Plant would result in a "significant net emissions increase" depends on a comparison between the "actual emissions" before and after the physical or operational change. Where, as here, the source has not yet begun o

perations firing natural gas, "actual emissions" after the change to natural gas firing are deemed to be the source's "potential to emit" for that fuel [see 40 CFR 52.21(b)(21)(iv)]. Potential annual NOx emissions when firing natural gas at the Greenwood Plant greatly exceed its current actual emissions. Therefore, as a result of the ability to fire natural gas after the change, the emissions of NOx at the source would experience a "signi ficant net emissions increase," within the meaning of the PSD regula tions. The fact that current annual "allowable emissions" for the Greenwood Plant when firing oil may greatly exceed future allowable (or potential) emissions when firing natural gas is not relevant for PSD applicability purposes. See Puerto Rican Cement Co., Inc. v. EPA No.89-1070 (First Circuit) (slip op. October 31, 1989).

In summary, our review indicates that Region V correctly applied the PSD applicability criteria.

The PSD requirements include an air quality and additional impact analysis and the application of best available control technology (BACT). The BACT requirement applies to "each proposed emissions unit at which a net emissions increase would occur as a result of a physical change or change in the method of operation in the unit" [see 52.21(j)(3)]. Consequently, although the addition of gas firing would subject the source as a whole to a PSD review, the requirement to apply BACT is applicable only to those emissions units at the source which undergo both a physical or operational change and a significant net emissions increase. It appears that the only emissions unit at the Greenwood Plant affected by the proposal to fire gas would be the existing boiler. Historically, it has been EPA's policy that where the individual boiler being converted is capable of accommodating the alternate fuel, BACT would not apply.

In this case, in addition to the physical changes at the source necessary to deliver natural gas to the existing boiler, a number of canes capable of burning natural gas would be installed in the existing burner assemblies. Modifications to the unit's overfired air duct are also planned. We also understand that there will be no changes in the present oil burning system, which will be retained.

Our review indicates that, by itself, the addition of gas canes to the burners is not a physical change or change in the method of operation in the unit and, consequently, would not subject the boiler to a BACT review. Therefore, if the sole change to the boiler is the addition of the canes, then, in this case, the only requirements necessary for a PSD permit are an air quality analysis, additional impacts analyses, and (if applicable) a Class I impact analysis--the application of BACT is not required. However,

the information submitted by Detroit Edison indicates that changes to the boiler's overfired air duct are also planned. At this time, without additional information on the nature and scope of the work to be done on the overfired air duct, we cannot determine whether these are physical or operational changes to the boiler that are necessary to make the boiler capable of accommodating natural gas. If the ducting work is necessary for this purpose, then a BACT analysis would likely be required.

In addition, it is unclear from the information submitted whether Detroit Edison plans to undertake further modifications to the boiler which would allow 100 percent load when firing natural gas. Currently, the unit as presently configured has the potential of achieving only 75 percent load when firing natural gas. To achieve a higher load, substantial modifications to the unit apparently would be required. These types of physical changes to the boiler likely would require a full PSD review, including a BACT analysis for the boiler. The BACT analysis would require that the source evaluate the use of all available additional air pollution controls for reducing NOx emissions. The analysis would consider retrofit costs for add-on controls and the fact that gas is a relatively clean-burning fuel. Consequently, in this case, it is possible that the currently planned use of a low-NOx burner design may be BACT for gas firing. However, such a conclusion would have to be demonstrated through the requisite BACT analysis. I have asked Region V to work with you should

you need assistance in preparing the analysis.

Sincerely,

Gerald A. Emison
Director
Office of Air Quality Planning
and Standards

cc: J. Calcagni, EPA/AQMD
D. Kee, EPA/Region V
G. Foote, EPA/OGC