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**WESTAR ENERGY CHOOSES LYON COUNTY LOCATION
FOR NEW GENERATING FACILITY**

Site selected for natural gas peaking power plants

TOPEKA, Kan., Aug. 22, 2006 — Westar Energy today announced it has chosen a location in Lyon County, Kansas, as the site for natural gas-fired combustion turbine peaking plants. The site is in a rural area of Lyon County near the company's existing Lang substation, which is about six miles northeast of Emporia, off of County Rd. 200.

Westar Energy and Lyon County officials will hold a news conference about the new plant on Tues., Aug. 22, 2006 at 9:30 a.m. in the County Commission Chambers at the Lyon County Courthouse, 430 Commercial in Emporia.

Westar Energy retained Burns & McDonnell of Kansas City, Mo. To perform a comprehensive site study for new peaking plants, beginning in May 2005. Westar Energy then, based on the study, selected the Lyon County site. The study evaluated several criteria including the availability of natural gas, environmental impact, transmission access and community support. Initially, Burns & McDonnell identified and evaluated 53 possible site locations

throughout Kansas. Westar Energy also solicited input from communities interested in hosting the plant. Burns & McDonnell helped evaluate the sites that communities proposed.

“We’re pleased to have received interest in our new plant from 29 different communities, said Jim Ludwig, vice president, regulatory and public affairs. “We are grateful for the strong support the Regional Development Association of East-Central Kansas (RDA) and people from this area have shown for this site.”

“The residents of Emporia and parts of Lyon County, are fortunate to have Westar Energy as our electrical supplier, said RDA Chair Ray Toso Chair. “Not only do they provide reliable and affordable electrical service, they are a tremendous asset to this community. Westar has knowledgeable, professional personnel that are active in our community and play a key role in our economic development projects. We are extremely pleased that they have selected Lyon County as the site for their new peaking plant. This plant will help them serve us even more efficiently than before. We congratulate them on their expansion.”

The RDA is a collaborative partnership between Lyon County, the City of Emporia, Emporia Enterprises, Inc, and the Emporia Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau.

Westar Energy will also host two open houses to provide information about the new plant to Lyon County residents. The first open house is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Wed., Aug. 23, 2006, at the Flint Hills Technical College, 3301 W. 18th Ave., Emporia. Residents will have the opportunity to meet with representatives of Westar Energy, as well as local economic development officials.

A peaking power plant is intended to operate during Westar Energy’s highest customer demand conditions, primarily on the hottest summer days. It is also intended to help the

company meet system growth demands. The new plant will have an initial generating capacity of up to 300 megawatts (MW), with additional capacity to be added in phases, bringing the total capacity to 600 MW. The total investment in the plant will be about \$330 million. In the years ahead, to meet its customers' needs, Westar Energy will also make substantial investments in environmental upgrades at existing power plants, a new coal-fired capacity, new transmission lines and energy efficiency programs.

“This plant is a very important part of our plan to meet the increasing needs of our customers in a reliable and cost-effective manner,” said Doug Sterbenz, executive vice president, generation and marketing. “The plant will be a state-of-the-art facility and designed to minimize any impact on neighbors and the environment.”

Although planning for new power plants began much earlier, the company's need to generate more electricity to meet higher demands is illustrated by two new peak power usage records set last month. On July 17, 2006, peak usage reached 4,893 MW, an increase of 210 MW, or 4.5%, over the previous peak. Another record was set on July 19, 2006, with usage reaching 4,938 MW.

Westar Energy plans to break ground on the new plant in the summer of 2007. The initial phase of the plant is scheduled to begin operation in the summer of 2008.

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Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE: WR) is the largest electric utility in Kansas, providing electric service to about 660,000 customers in the state. Westar Energy has nearly 6,000 megawatts of electric generation capacity and operates and coordinates approximately 33,000 miles of electric distribution and transmission lines.

For more information about Westar Energy, visit us on the Internet at <http://www.WestarEnergy.com>.