



Problem

In 1991, UCLA decided to build a state-of-the-art chiller and cogeneration facility to provide clean, cost-effective energy for its campus. Even though the facility would actually lower air emissions from the campus by 34%, the permitting process for construction was complex and highly political. UCLA needed to:

- Design and implement a strategy to expedite permit approval from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) for this 45-megawatt, \$188 million cogeneration project.
- Achieve broad support for the project throughout the campus and adjoining communities.

Solution

CEA worked with university and government officials to successfully negotiate the permitting process. Specifically, CEA:

- Developed an overall project case statement that clearly explained the purpose and benefits of this chiller/cogeneration project to supporters and skeptics alike.
- Worked with UCLA and the facility's designers to propose a project to the SCAQMD that established new Best Available Control Technology (BACT) standards for NOx emissions and cooling tower emissions.
- Engaged SCAQMD staff in a collaborative review process so that questions and information requests were answered quickly and completely, thereby allowing for a timely review of the permit request.
- Formed a UCLA community briefing team to meet with and educate legislators and other governmental officials who had expressed concerns about the project.

Results

In focusing all involved parties on the solution, CEA helped UCLA complete its permit application in a timely manner, thereby shortening the construction schedule and substantially reducing overall costs. The process became an example for proactively addressing issues at UCLA and for developing creative, constructive approaches that would be embraced by the regulatory agency.