

to the editor

A new public utility

The title of SN article, "Using power-plant heat in cities" (9/30/72, p. 218) really caught my eye for it could as easily describe a proposal I made in 1970 to then AEC Chairman Seaborg to turn thermal pollution from nuclear power plants into a useful commodity. It seemed as incredible to me then as it does now that, faced with an impending energy crisis, we should ignore the paradox that power plants waste substantially more energy in heat form than they produce and that this heat is not only harmful when wasted but that a significant portion of our limited energy resources are depleted in producing desired heat elsewhere. So I suggested that we use cooling water to heat our cities!

In contrast to the proposal of Beall and Miller of Oak Ridge Laboratory, which apparently is to pipe turbine steam to a hypothetical new city, I would transport heated water, delivering it at approximately 180 degrees as a new public utility for existing cities so that all types of consumers could use it for "hydronic" space-heating.

Barbara J. Durand
Architect
Fullerton, Calif.

OTA board

Just for the record, I might point out that one of the reasons I was chosen to sit on the board of the new Office of Technology Assessment (SN: 10/28/72, p. 279) is my position as ranking member of the National Science Foundation subcommittee of the Labor and Public Welfare Committee. The OTA is directed to carry on continuing liaison with the National Science Foundation, drawing both upon its staff and resources, and this subcommittee is thus essential for smooth operation of the new board.

Peter H. Dominick
United States Senator
Washington, D.C.

A light in the dark

Your accurate reporting of my remarks and thoughts ("Sounding out metal toxicity," SN: 9/30/72, p. 223) is like a light in a dark area. So often, the scientist is gun shy from experience. May I extend to you my thanks for your excellent publication.

Arthur Furst, Ph.D.
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