



Texas energy storage andorra

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People are particularly concerned about how the community's small fire department would deal with an emergency.

Citizens of Van Zandt County, about one hour east of Dallas, are concerned about the possible impacts of a proposed energy project.

The lithium battery storage facility called Amador Energy Storage by Finnish company Taaleri Energia would collect and store power to be used later. So energy from a solar farm could be gathered during the day, stored, then re-deployed at night.

But many people in the rural area are worried about potential safety issues and negative impacts to land and water. David Dunagan, a leader of the group Save Van Zandt County, spoke to the Texas Standard about their concerns and potential solutions.

This transcript has been edited lightly for clarity:

Texas Standard: How did you first become aware of this proposed project?

David Dunagan: Well, about six years ago, we had a proposed solar facility plan to come in and take away about a thousand acres of our pasture land that's used for, in most cases, growing hay. And we managed to stop that.

But we just started watching ERCOT, their reports of new potential facilities and things like that, and managed to see this pop on the radar. We didn't think much about it until our commissioners court decided to have a meeting with that battery facility so that the citizens of the county could visit and ask questions.

What are the main concerns you guys have about this facility?

Well, this may sound a little ironic, but out here, we kind of almost consider ourselves true environmentalists. We're all about, you know, clean air, clean land.

So when something like this comes out here that either has the potential in some cases to catch fire or cause a fire, or you're bringing something in that has a lot of chemicals and stuff in it, it gets people around here itchy because we're really trying to stay away from fires and chemicals and things like that.

They're almost nonexistent. In the rural parts of most Texas counties, and especially Van Zandt



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County, the closest fire department is a volunteer fire department, as pretty much all of them are in the county. It's only got five members. And at any point in time, not all five are going to be able to show up, so it'll be two or three.

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