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As I prepared to speak in public about the hazards Hyperscale Data Centers present to our health, I found an article in the Guardian reviewing the deaths in Donora, PA in 1948 from smog. Adding more coal powered electricity generation will push us back to that deathly air.

The 21 coal, natural gas, and peaker plants identified in the report as candidates for redevelopment had a combined capacity of 4.8 GW when they were retired. That is enough energy to power 4 million homes. Of the 21 plants identified, 5 - 7 will eventually be redeveloped according to the PUC, but there's no reason to think that the number could be expanded as the number of data centers coming to PA grows.

The PATER report states, “Environmental considerations beyond existing site conditions were not evaluated as part of this analysis. Because the study focuses on redevelopment viability rather than specific redevelopment pathways, potential environmental impacts associated with future end uses, such as air emissions, water use, wastewater generation, and other permitting considerations, were outside the scope of this assessment. Such impacts would need to be evaluated as part of project-specific planning and environmental review processes.” (P. 102) The cumulative impacts should be understood before any individual redevelopment project begins. If a subset of the list of plants is selected for redevelopment, a cumulative impact statement must be a requirement before the overall redevelopment project is approved.

Don't poison your people while running after the ghost of HSDC development for AI.