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**CONSERVATION LAW FOUNDATION TAKES AIM AT AGING COAL PLANT****PUTS DOMINION ENERGY ON NOTICE OF CLEAN AIR ACT LAWSUIT**

**BOSTON, MA January 27, 2010** – In a continuing effort to bring the Salem Harbor Station coal-fired power plant into compliance with the federal Clean Air Act, Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) today announced that it intends to file a federal suit against Dominion Energy of New England for ongoing violations of smokestack emissions limits. The suit focuses on the emissions of particulate matter – small particles of chemicals, metals and ash which have been linked to severe health and environmental problems.

If successful, the suit would hold Dominion responsible for paying millions of dollars in penalties retroactively for violations of the smokestack emissions limits. The violations are documented in Dominion’s own quarterly reports of mandatory monitoring at the Salem Harbor Station power plant.

“These continuing violations show that Dominion Energy is indifferent to the hazards it is imposing on the residents of Salem and the neighboring communities,” said Shanna Cleveland, staff attorney for CLF. “Dominion Energy must be held accountable for abiding by the laws that are meant to protect our health and the environment. If it cannot meet those standards, then we have to ask why this dirty, obsolete coal-fired power plant should be allowed to continue to operate.”

For two decades, CLF, along with residents of Salem and neighboring communities, has fought to force Dominion, and before them the prior owners of the plant, to clean up or shut down Salem Harbor Station. The plant has a long history of violations related to its coal-burning operations, repeatedly exceeding legal limits on the discharge of known pollutants including, over time, mercury, coal ash and now, soot.

Recent studies have shown that even short-term exposure to soot has been linked to higher rates of hospitalization for heart and respiratory problems. Children and the elderly are the most vulnerable, experiencing health problems ranging from decreased lung function to premature death. Jane Bright, of the public health advocacy group Healthlink stated, “The soot that Dominion is pumping into our air has been proven to be damaging to the health of our community. It is outrageous that they have been routinely exceeding limits on these dangerous emissions, while leading us to believe otherwise.”

Residents throughout the North Shore feel the effects of Salem Harbor Station’s toxic plume. Lori Ehrlich, state representative for Marblehead, Swampscott and parts of Lynn stated, “I see that filthy plume heading right for my community and I want to tell

everyone to hold their breath. Instead, we endure the daily assault of black soot that sticks to everything from our cars to our throats. The people of this region should not be forced to pay for the effects of Dominion's negligence with their health, while Dominion continues to get off scot free."

"Moving beyond coal is vital to fighting climate change and creating a green economy in Salem and throughout the Commonwealth," said Jeff Barz-Snell of the community group SAFE (Salem Alliance for the Environment). "The time has come for Dominion to invest in cleaning up Salem Harbor Station, or make way for clean energy solutions like energy efficiency, solar and wind."

Lisa Abbate, with the Salem citizen's group A Vision for Salem, is advocating for a clean alternative for the Salem Harbor Station site. "Salem Harbor Station takes much more away from our communities than it gives. We need to take bold steps to shut the plant down and move swiftly toward the cleaner future we all envision for Salem and the surrounding region – for our health, for our environment and for our economy.

The Conservation Law Foundation ([www.clf.org](http://www.clf.org)) works to solve the most significant environmental challenges facing New England. CLF's advocates use law, economics and science to create innovative strategies to conserve natural resources, protect public health and promote vital communities in our region. Founded, in 1966, CLF is a nonprofit, member-supported organization with offices in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont.

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NOTE: Photos of Salem Harbor Station's plume are available at:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/conservationlawfoundation/sets/72157623295027376/>