

The Council of Ministers has extended the deadline for application for derogation by coal-fired power plants, according to an announcement by the government press services. The government has adopted amendments to the Decree for Conditions and Procedures for Issuing Integrated Permits. They extend the deadline from six to nine months so that integrated permits can be reviewed after the decisions on Best Available Techniques conclusions.

The current deadline has been considered insufficient for installation operators to prepare and submit the necessary documentation to the competent authority. With its extension, the operators are given an opportunity to prepare and provide the complete set of information so that delays in reviewing procedures is avoided.

On 28 April 2017, the European Commission adopted BAT conclusions for large combustion plants pursuant to Directive 2010/75/EU regarding industrial emissions. The reference document came into power from 17 August 2017 – the day of its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union. It applied immediately for new production capacities and it will apply for existing ones after four years. The adopted document introduced new, stricter values of emission levels for sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, mercury and others, which are generated by the installations burning coal.

At the end of July 2017 a coordination entity was created within the Ministry of Energy whose task is to support LCP operators in applying for a derogation. The entity has held a number of meetings with all stakeholders resulting in a joint approach towards resolving the case

In late October 2017 the Ministry of Energy announced its report to the National Assembly regarding the measure taken by the government in relation to the adopted reference document on large combustion plants. It said that the 6-month period for submitting requests for a derogation from the operators of LCPs in Bulgaria is inadequate and they offer that it is extended to one year.

One of the reasons for the deadline extension request was the inclusion of measuring mercury levels in the atmosphere for the first time, which requires continuous research carried out by licensed laboratories. A second reason is the insufficient time for the preparation of a comparison between costs and environmental benefits. Extending the period by six months – until 16 August 2018 – was said to be a necessary prerequisite for a more complete and precise documentation to be prepared by the LCP operators.

Source: publics.bg