

High-tech power plant construction begins

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The U.S. Department of Energy has announced the start of construction of what will be among the world's cleanest, most efficient coal-fueled power plants.

Officials broke ground Monday for the 285-megawatt integrated gasification combined cycle facility near Orlando, Fla.

The Southern Co. will operate the facility through its Southern Power subsidiary, with commercial operations scheduled to start in June 2010.

Energy Department officials said the new plant will turn coal into synthetic gas for generating electricity, while significantly reducing emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and mercury. It also will produce up to 25 percent less carbon dioxide emissions than do existing pulverized coal plants and consume approximately half the water.

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