

**From:** [Clayton Mortl](#)  
**To:** [planadmin](#)  
**Subject:** In protest of proposed data center in Milwaukee Midtown  
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Hello, my name is Clayton Mortl, I am 29 years old, I was born in Milwaukee, and although I am not currently a resident of the city - I live in Elm Grove - I am still gravely concerned about the proposal for a new data center to be built in the Midtown Center shopping district. It has already been established that data centers are very harmful to the environment. According to the Environmental and Energy Study Institute, there were 5,426 data centers nationally as of March 2025, and the number is skyrocketing. Collectively, these centers consumed about 17 gigawatts (GW) of power in 2022 (for context, a large nuclear power plant generates about 1 GW). About 56% of the electricity used to power data centers nationwide comes from fossil fuels. Data centers' projected electricity demand in 2030 is set to increase to up to 130 GW (or 1,050 TWh), which would represent close to 12% of total U.S. annual demand. Building new fossil-fuel plants to fulfill this demand will increase carbon emissions and further contribute to climate change. To increase sustainability, data center developers have three options when it comes to siting data centers: they can build them in places with an abundance of renewable energy, they can generate renewable power on-site, or they can make their facilities more energy efficient, thereby reducing their need for power from the grid. Data center developers are increasingly tapping into freshwater resources to quench the thirst of data centers, which is putting nearby communities at risk. Large data centers can consume up to five million gallons of water a day, equivalent to the water use of a town populated by 10,000 to 50,000 people. With larger and new AI-focused data centers, water consumption is increasing alongside energy usage and carbon emissions. Data centers could represent up to 12% of total U.S. electricity demand by 2028: up to 580 terawatt-hours a year. Some utilities are moving to extend the life of coal power plants. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has taken steps to facilitate or even encourage such developments. As data centers expand, utilities are receiving hundreds of gigawatts in interconnection requests, necessitating significant infrastructure investments, causing electricity bills to spike for many households, contributing to an affordability crisis, particularly for the most vulnerable communities. Data centers emit sounds from the humming of cooling systems, rumbling of diesel generators, and whirring of fans, which can be heard for hundreds of feet around them. Noise pollution is regulated at the local and state levels through zoning ordinances, but for a time in the 1970s, the Environmental Protection Agency oversaw noise pollution and conducted noise-control investigations. It still has the legal authority to do so, but because there is a lack of reliable data from sound level meters and because most county or community noise ordinances are written to address noisy block parties (rather than data centers), most noise complaints go nowhere, leading to frustration and lower property values. The potential negative impacts of data center expansion on carbon emissions, water usage, and electricity bills are relatively well documented. But their potential PFAS pollution, both direct and indirect, is less well known. PFAS, also known as forever chemicals, are very durable and accumulate, in both the environment and the body, over time, posing real concerns for long-term human and ecological health. Data centers host tens of thousands of servers that run 24/7 in order to keep virtual networks, cloud storage, and computing in operation. Such servers require semiconductors, cooling systems, and fire suppressants, all sources of PFAS forever chemicals. Many emerging technologies hold promise in terms of destroying PFAS, but they are energy intensive and expensive. This brings up the ongoing debate over who should bear the cost of potential solutions. I will be sure to

include all the articles from which I got this information. Please do not entertain this proposal any further. The science should speak for itself.

Clayton Mortl

<https://www.eesi.org/articles/view/data-center-energy-needs-are-upending-power-grids-and-threatening-the-climate>

<https://www.eesi.org/articles/view/data-centers-and-water-consumption>

<https://www.eesi.org/articles/view/data-center-buildout-is-hungry-for-fossil-fuels>

<https://www.eesi.org/articles/view/data-center-power-demands-are-contributing-to-higher-energy-bills>

<https://www.eesi.org/articles/view/communities-are-raising-noise-pollution-concernsabout-data-centers>

<https://www.eesi.org/articles/view/data-centers-are-contributing-to-pfas-forever-chemical-pollution>