

Press release

RWE brings coal exit forward to 2030: Five inhabited villages and three farmsteads to remain, former settlement of Lützerath to be razed

- **Utilisation of Lützerath area required due to energy crisis, demolition to start**
- **No original inhabitants remain in the village, all necessary permissions have been granted**
- **Company calls for calm and warns against dangers of protest action**

Essen/Cologne, 11 January 2023

Today, RWE Power will start to demolish the former settlement of Lützerath. Mining operations will subsequently commence in the area. All necessary licences and court orders have been granted and all original inhabitants left the village some time ago.

The appropriation of the village is part of a comprehensive political agreement between the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Industry, Climate Action and Energy of The State of North Rhine-Westphalia, and RWE. The agreement was presented to the public in October 2022 and, among other things, is setting out to bring RWE's exit from coal forward by eight years to 2030. This means that the previously planned operating time of the company's coal-fired power plants has been halved. RWE is not receiving any additional funds to compensate for this change. An amendment to the Coal Phase-out Act concerning RWE's early exit from coal has already been passed by both chambers of the German parliament. The accelerated phase-out will lead to the volume of lignite being extracted from the Garzweiler opencast mine being approximately halved, meaning that the villages of Keyenberg, Kuckum, Oberwestrich, Unterwestrich and Berverath, including the three farmsteads of Holzweiler (Eggeratherhof, Roitzerhof, Weyerhof), which are all still partially inhabited, will remain in place. So no further dwellers will need to relocate from these places.

However, the coal under the former settlement of Lützerath, which is located close to the current edge of the Garzweiler opencast mine, is needed to make optimal use of the lignite fleet during the energy crisis and thus save gas in electricity generation for Germany. At the same time, sufficient volumes of material are needed for high-quality recultivation of former opencast mines. Independent reports commissioned by the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Industry, Climate Action and Energy of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia clearly corroborated the need for utilising the area under the former settlement. These reports as well as the political agreement are accessible to the public.



Measures put in place in and around Lützerath to protect all concerned parties

As one of the first safety measures, a 1.5-kilometre long perimeter fence is being erected, marking out the company-own construction site where the remaining buildings, ancillary systems, streets and sewers of the former settlement will be demolished. In addition, trees and shrubs are being removed. Then, Garzweiler opencast mining operations, which have already moved close, can start to expose the lignite for generating electricity in the region's power plants and excavate sufficient earth and loess for designing attractive landscapes and recultivating areas previously used for opencast mining to a very high standard.

The appropriation of the former settlement of Lützerath is part of a legal process that has been ongoing for decades. The Garzweiler opencast mine stretching out across the area of the former settlement was approved as early as 1995. Originally, the small village had just under 100 inhabitants, who have by now all been relocated – most of them moved around 8 kilometres away to Neu-Immenrath. Their relocation was completed in April 2017. A large part of the former settlement has already been demolished.

Company appeals for calm, acceptance of the rule of law and non-violence

Currently, only people who are illegally occupying the buildings and areas belonging to RWE Power remain in the former settlement. The company regrets that the planned demolition process can only take place under substantial police protection and that opponents of the opencast mine are calling for illegal disruptions and also criminal acts.

As a precaution, RWE Power wants to make protesters aware of the hazards associated with operating equipment and work processes and that they are impossible to gauge for people who are unfamiliar with the setting. Access to the sites is thus not permitted to unauthorised persons. Anyone who ignores these rules endangers their health and safety and risks prosecution. RWE is appealing to potential protesters not to trespass on company sites, not to participate in unlawful acts, and to remain calm during the protest campaign. Violence geared towards the police or other personnel on site is completely unacceptable.

RWE is appealing to the squatters to observe the rule of law and to end the illegal occupation of buildings, plants and sites belonging to RWE peacefully. Nobody should put their own health and life at risk by participating in illegal activity.

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RWE Power AG

RWE Power AG, with headquarters in Essen and Cologne, Germany, is a company of the RWE Group. Its business is lignite-based and nuclear power generation. The Company employs about 11,000 people and operates three opencast lignite mines in the Rhineland area. Lignite production is predominantly used for electricity generation in the Company's own power stations, but is also processed to make solid fuels and filter materials. In addition, RWE Power manages the operation, decommissioning and dismantling of RWE's nuclear facilities. The RWE Power's plants have the capacity to supply 9 gigawatts of electricity.

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