

ASH POND NEWSLETTER



May 2019

The following is a collection of ash pond news from the month of May. The intent of the newsletter is to summarize news regarding ash pond closure activities, lawsuits filed against utilities relating to their ash ponds, as well as regulatory changes impacting ash pond operations or closures. This newsletter is distributed on a monthly basis.

IMPORTING COAL ASH

The JED Landfill, located in Osceola County, **Florida**, has made a deal to import 65,000 tons to 325,000 tons of coal ash from **Puerto Rico** and dispose of it in their landfill. Puerto Rico has banned the disposal of coal ash in the landfills on the island. The importing and disposal of the coal ash from Puerto Rico has sparked controversy and has led to protests from citizens. County leadership officials have written letters and expressed concerns with the landfill accepting the waste from Puerto Rico.

<https://www.orlandosentinel.com/opinion/editorials/os-op-coal-ash-osceola-county-editorial-20190520-zcjq5uj7pnawradxn6caobcyp4-story.html>

<https://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/os-ne-osceola-halts-puerto-rico-coal-ash-20190515-zptp7fx6yfdhdgo5jo3m67u2ua-story.html>

<https://www.wftv.com/news/local/protests-continue-over-dumping-of-coal-ash-at-osceola-county-landfill/953105823>



Local Citizens Protesting Coal Ash Disposal

LEGAL AND REGULATORY

A bill to regulate the cleanup of coal ash ponds at **Illinois** power plant sites passed the Illinois House and Senate and now the bill is heading to the Governor's desk. The bill would require a coal ash pond owner to submit a closure alternatives analysis to the Illinois EPA. This would address several closure scenarios and options laid out in the legislation and give the Illinois EPA the authority to choose the safest plan for coal ash remediation.

<https://will.illinois.edu/news/story/coal-ash-bill-passes-house-heads-to-governor>

<https://www.sj-r.com/news/20190528/coal-ash-removal-bill-heads-to-governor>

With an increase in ash pond closures and closure costs, utilities have been trying to pass those costs onto their customers. Officials in **Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina** are pushing back on the utilities.

<https://www.claimsjournal.com/news/national/2019/05/14/290910.htm>

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-05-14/with-billions-at-stake-utilities-fight-to-charge-coal-ash-costs>

Alabama Power was fined \$250,000 for pollutants found in groundwater near the Gadsden Ash Pond on the banks of the Coosa River. The Alabama Department of Environmental Management set forth requirements for Alabama Power in addition to the fine, giving a time frame to produce a plan to carry out a comprehensive groundwater investigation, an assessment of corrective measures, an investigative report that will evaluate what may have caused the pollution, and quarterly progress reports. A watchdog organization that monitors water quality along the Coosa River is trying to get Alabama Power to remove the coal ash from the ash pond instead of capping in place.



Coal Ash Pond at Alabama Power's Plan Barry

<https://www.gadsdentimes.com/news/20190523/coosa-riverkeeper-alabama-power-should-remove-coal-ash>

COAL POWER PLANT ASH POND CLOSURES AND MODIFICATIONS

After identifying high concentrations of boron, lithium, and molybdenum, **Vectren** must stop putting coal ash into the ash pond at the A.B. Brown Power Plant by October 2020. After that they must begin closing the pond. **Vectren** plans to drain the pond and recycle the remaining coal ash. The water drained from the pond will go through the utilities wastewater treatment process to meet the same pollution standards of other water it is permitted to discharge to the Ohio River.

<https://www.courierpress.com/story/news/local/2019/05/23/vectren-planning-drain-close-a-b-brown-coal-ash-pond/3549588002/>

Xcel Energy plans to close its last two coal-fired power plants in Minnesota by 2030, a decade earlier than originally scheduled. This is part of **Xcel's** plan to be 100 percent carbon-free by 2030.

<https://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/xcel-energy-accelerates-coal-plant-closures-to-meet-100-clean-energy-goal#gs.f6i519>

<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2019/05/20/xcel-energy-coal-nuclear-power-wind-solar-minnesota>

Dynegy officials announced that they are redesigning the riverbank stabilization project at the coal ash pond at the Vermilion Power Station in central Illinois. Their original design was very controversial and faced kickback from the community.

<http://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/2019-05-21/dynegy-re-evaluating-plans-middle-fork-stabilization-after-public-input.html>



Coal Ash Ponds at Vermilion Power Station

The Columbia Municipal Power Plant has been closed since 2015. When deciding what to do with the ash in their ash pond, the **City of Columbia**, Missouri decided to remove the ash from the pond instead of capping it in place. The excavation has been ongoing since 2016 and is nearly done. The first step was to drain all the pond's water. Then, the ash was removed and spread out to dry. The final step has been hauling the ash to the Columbia Landfill. The project has cost the city close to \$5 million, or approximately \$100 per electric customer.

https://www.columbiamissourian.com/news/local/columbia-coal-ash-cleanup-pleases-environmentalists/article_1e4400ae-7813-11e9-9930-cb587de8cbb4.html

Santee Cooper completed the removal of all the coal ash from the two coal ash ponds at the former Grainger Generating Station in Conway, South Carolina. **Santee Cooper** began removing the 200,000 tons of coal ash in September 2018.

https://www.myhorrynews.com/news/local/horry_county/santee-cooper-clears-coal-ash-from-ponds-near-river-bank/article_f28e1d08-7328-11e9-bd5d-b7dc0fa61ef4.html

CONTAMINATION

In the most recent 2019 monitoring reports, published online, **Duke Energy** disclosed they are exceeding the Federal Groundwater Protection Standards for mercury at the Belews Creek Plant; barium at the Marshall Plant; and lithium, radium 226, and radium 228 at the Roxboro Plant. In April, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality ordered **Duke** to remove the coal ash from their remaining ash ponds in North Carolina. **Duke** is in litigation and they are hoping to delay or avoid having to remove the ash from their ponds.

<https://www.southernenvironment.org/news-and-press/press-releases/more-pollution-by-more-toxic-substances-found-at-duke-energy-coal-ash-sites>

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