

ASH POND NEWSLETTER



September 2019

The following is a collection of ash pond news from the month of September. 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.



Excavating Coal Ash from Ponds at Grainger Generating Station

A LUCKY BREAK

Following Hurricane Dorian, a crew monitoring **Santee Cooper's** former Grainger Generating Station discovered a breach in the dike of Ash Pond One. The dike breached and water from the elevated Waccamaw River filled Ash Pond One. The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, local government officials, the Waccamaw Riverkeeper, downstream water users, and other stakeholders were notified the following morning. **Santee Cooper** and officials both determined there is no risk of any environmental impacts caused by this breach. In 2014, **Santee Cooper** began excavating its two Grainger ponds, and the utility completed removal of ash and contact soil in Ash Pond One earlier this year. As part of that plan, **Santee Cooper** already has a permit to breach

the dike of Ash Pond One but was delaying that breach to allow for wetlands restoration.

<https://www.wsav.com/news/former-grainger-ash-pond-breached-santee-cooper-says-no-environmental-impact-expected/>

LEGAL AND REGULATORY

A rule proposed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in July states electric utilities should not have to make financial assurances to cover the risk that the industry will produce pollution it cannot afford to clean up. Advocacy groups are concerned the EPA's proposal could open the door for coal-fired power plants to abandon toxic coal ash pollution or leave consumers to foot the bill. The public comment period for this bill closed on September 27, 2019 and the EPA is under a court-ordered deadline to issue a final rule by December 2, 2020.

<https://www.virginiamercury.com/2019/09/25/11582/>

COAL POWER PLANT ASH POND CLOSURES AND MODIFICATIONS

Duke Energy has established more ambitious goals to reduce carbon emissions from its electric power operations by 50% by 2030 and to reach net zero carbon in its system by 2050. For **Duke** to achieve these goals, **Duke** will have to speed up the closure of its remaining coal plants.

<https://www.wsocvtv.com/news/local/duke-energy-to-accelerate-coal-plant-closings/987463388>

An agreement could be in place to close **Illinois Power Resources Generating LLC's** (an affiliate of **Vistra Energy**) E.D. Edwards coal power plant in Peoria County, Illinois. The plant has been subject to a lawsuit by environmental groups since 2013. The agreement would see the plant closed by the end of 2022 and provide \$8.6 million in funds for workforce development, and public health and environmental projects. More than 70 employees currently work at the facility.

<https://www.pjstar.com/news/20190916/agreement-could-shutter-edwards-coal-plant-in-2022>

Commercial Liability Partners has recently purchased **Dynegy Midwest Generation's** closed Wood River Power Plant in East Alton, Illinois. Commercial Liability Partners announced the firm plans to focus on demolition of the two coal-fueled units as well as environmental remediation and repurposing the site for future redevelopment.

<https://www.theintelligencer.com/news/article/New-owner-plans-work-at-Dynegy-14438294.php>



Wood River Power Plant

CONTAMINATION

Groundwater samples taken near the coal ash pond at **Lakeland Electric's** McIntosh Power Plant have tested positive for elevated levels of heavy metals. According to the latest 2018 estimates, **Lakeland Electric** stores about 2.95 million cubic yards of coal ash in their onsite coal ash pond. The utility will continue to monitor groundwater.

<https://www.theledger.com/news/20190927/water-near-les-coal-ash-storage-contains-toxic-metals>

Leaking coal ash ponds at **Talen Energy's** Colstrip Power Plant in Montana have contaminated groundwater in the area. **Talen Energy** is proposing to install 27 new extraction wells and 54 injection wells. **Talen** is proposing to pump out contaminated water and pump clean water back into the aquifer. Montana State regulators will decide on the proposal after a public comment period.

<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/montana/articles/2019-09-22/colstrip-ash-cleanup-uses-more-wells-to-capture-fouled-water>



Colstrip Power Plant

A growing number of residents in Anderson County, Tennessee living within a few miles of **Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA)** Bull Run coal-fired power plant are reporting the discovery of a substance similar in appearance and texture to coal ash waste produced at the plant. Both **TVA** and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) say monitoring equipment at the Bull Run Fossil Plant show no reason to think the particulate matter that nearby residents have observed is coming from the plant or related to coal ash. **TVA** has collected samples and sent them to two separate labs to ensure an independent analysis. The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation also plans to conduct their own sampling of the material. Results of the sampling is not yet available.

<https://www.knoxnews.com/story/news/local/tennessee/tvacoalash/2019/09/20/tdec-conduct-testing-bull-run-mystery-dust-tva-coal-ash/2375957001/>

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