

# ASH POND NEWSBYTES



August 2022

Dear Readers,

The following is a collection of ash pond news from the month of August 2022. Our intent is to provide you with important news pieces to help inform your business decisions and keep you up to date about the coal and ash pond industry.

– Peter Alvey & The Roux Team

## LEGAL AND REGULATORY

The **USEPA** is facing a lawsuit for exempting almost 300 landfills in 38 states from complying with federal health and environmental regulations.

[Link](#)

Missouri regulators last week withdrew a controversial coal ash permitting plan following widespread confusion about which plants and coal ash ponds would be eligible. The controversial draft permit had been widely criticized, with opponents arguing it would have allowed coal ash ponds to pollute groundwater with no monitoring. [Link](#)

Federal regulators who want to enforce coal ash storage rules must work through state agencies that have largely approved companies' storage proposals, resulting in coal ash stored in ponds, landfills, old limestone quarries, and even "Ash Island" in a lake popular with Tennessee boaters and swimmers. [Link](#)



The smokestacks in Morro Bay, California.

## COAL ASH POND CLOSURE AND MODIFICATIONS

**Vistra Corporation** has plans to demolish the smokestacks at the closed power plant in Morro Bay, California (see photo above). Vistra has proposed to build a lithium-ion battery storage facility on the Site, which was built by PG&E in the 1950s and shut down in 2014. [Link](#)

Demolition has begun at the former **Portland Generating Station** in Upper Mount Bethel Township, along the Delaware River. The plan is to have the property ready for redevelopment by the end of 2023. The property surrounds an active plant that is operated by **GenOn Energy**. [Link](#)

The former **CP Crane Coal Generating Station** in Baltimore County, Maryland, was scheduled for implosion on August 17, 2022. [Link](#)

In a project that is raising environmental justice concerns, **TVA** is moving more than 3.2 million tons of coal ash from its Bull Run plant. The project will involve more than 240 trucks per day for 10 years through an environmental justice community that already faces heavy industrial pollution from nearby oil and gas refineries, pipelines, freeways, rail yards, and trash dumps. The same community just caused **Valero Energy Corp.** and **Plains All-American** to abandon a pipeline bid through the same area. [Link](#)

## CLOSURE DELAYS DUE TO CURRENT ENERGY ENVIRONMENT

One of the unforeseen impacts of the Russian war on Ukraine is that many of the nation's coal fired power plants are having their lives extended to meet energy demands. This is being done to reduce the usage of natural gas due to the removal of Russian gas from the world's markets.

**Mon Power** has reached a settlement to keep two West Virginia power plants operating past 2028. The settlement will provide for the upgrade of wastewater treatment at the Fort Martin and Harrison power plants. West Virginia rate payers will cover the \$142 million in costs. [Link](#)

At least six coal-fired power plants across the country have announced delays to planned closures, citing concerns about energy shortages. Among them are **Alliant Energy's** Edgewater plant in Sheboygan and Columbia Energy Center in Portage, Wisconsin. Plants in Indiana, Nebraska, and New Mexico have delayed closures as well. [Link](#)

The shutdown of **NRG Energy's** Indian River Power Plant, Delaware's only remaining coal-fired power plant (see photo at right) has been delayed while electrical grid updates are made. The upgrades will expand the grid's capacity across the state to ensure reliable service. The cost of keeping the power plant running is being passed on to the ratepayers.

[Link](#)

## COAL ASH AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

Another trend to watch is the conversion of coal fired plants to renewable energy usage. Because the plants already have the necessary infrastructure, connection to the grid, and zoning, these conversions can be streamlined.

**FirstEnergy** plans to develop a large-scale solar facility near the closed ash landfill at the R. Paul Smith Power Plant in Berkeley County, West Virginia. The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection allowed **Allegheny Energy Supply Company** (a FirstEnergy subsidiary) to end environmental monitoring at the landfill. The plant was commissioned in 1927 and decommissioned in 2012. [Link](#)

**Talen Energy** is seeking approval to place over 44,000 solar panels across nine company-owned properties in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The project footprint covers a former coal ash basin as well as adjacent land to the south. The solar panels planned for the Site are designed to track the sun's path. The 20-megawatt facility would generate energy to power hundreds of homes. [Link](#)



*NRG Energy's Indian River Power Plant.*

## IN OTHER NEWS...

A **Mid-Valley Pipeline** oil spill in Tennessee has cost \$4.7 million. The spill occurred on June 29, 2022, after the exposed pipeline was hit by a skid steer with a mower attachment. Approximately 4,345 barrels of oil were released, with 3,300 barrels reaching nearby Horse Creek. [Link](#)

A lightning strike on August 6, 2022, set an oil storage facility on fire at the **Matanzas Supertanker Base** in **Cuba**. Explosions and flames injured 121 people and left 17 firefighters missing. Approximately 800 nearby residents were evacuated. [Link](#)

## Contact Us

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## COAL ASH AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (CONT.)

The **Greenidge Generation** Power Plant in Dresden, New York (photo below) closed in 2011. However, it was restarted in 2017 to mine cryptocurrency. The plant is now powered by natural gas, but two million tons of coal ash stored on- and off-site remain. The USEPA has denied an extension sought by the cryptocurrency company to close its coal ash ponds. In 2014, the Site was bought by **Atlas Holdings**, which established a subsidiary called Greenidge Generation Holdings to run the plant and bitcoin mining. [Link](#)

**Cleco** and **Southwestern Electric Power Company** are partnering with a renewable energy firm to convert a shuttered Louisiana coal plant into a 240 MW solar farm. [Link](#)



*The Greenidge Generation bitcoin mining facility in Dresden, NY.*