

ASH POND NEWSBYTES



October 2022

Dear Readers,

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

At the end of 2021, an explosion at the **CSX** coal terminal allegedly blanketed Curtis Bay, a South Baltimore, Maryland neighborhood. A proposed class-action lawsuit has been filed against CSX by two residents who claim inhalation exposure. The proposed lawsuit seeks \$5 million in damages and has requests for a medical monitoring fund. CSX officials have stated the explosion occurred due to a methane buildup inside a 770-foot-long coal transport tunnel. CSX may face more than \$120,000 in penalties from the Maryland Department of the Environment and the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration. [Link](#)

COAL ASH POND CLOSURE AND MODIFICATIONS

Environmental advocates are pushing for the closure of **Every's Hawthorn Power Plant** in Kansas City, Missouri. In response, Every stated that taking the power plant offline will cause reliability concerns and that the power plant is not an environmental threat to communities. [Link](#)



Explosion damage at the CSX Curtis Bay Coal Terminal. [Link](#)

COAL ASH POND CLOSURE AND MODIFICATIONS (CONT.)

In 2021, United States coal power plants received less than half of the coal received in 2010 (449 million short tons vs. 957 million short tons, respectively). The majority of the coal, around 70%, delivered to the power plants is transported by train while 11% is delivered by barge, 9% is delivered by truck, 8% is delivered from the mines directly, and the remaining 2% is delivered by other means. [Link](#)

CPS Energy has plans to stop using coal as a power source by 2030 and confirmation of the closure will need to be decided by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT). CPS Energy has proposed to close one coal unit by 2030 and has plans to convert a second unit to natural gas by 2028. For approval by ERCOT, CPS Energy will need to provide information on where the replaced energy will be sourced. [Link](#)

The **AES Indiana Petersburg Plant** has been proposed by AES to undergo the conversion of two coal units to natural gas by 2025, as well as the addition of 1,300 megawatts of wind and solar storage by 2027. The natural gas units will provide 1,052 megawatts of natural gas power at the plant. It is estimated that the conversion will reduce carbon emissions by 68% compared to levels in 2018. [Link](#)

RENEWABLE ENERGY

A notice of intent for the funding of a \$32 million program for the production of rare earth elements, minerals, and materials from coal sources has been issued by the **Department of Energy**. The **West Virginia Water Research Institute at West Virginia University** is targeting a 1% to 2% recovery of rare earth elements extracted from an acid mine drainage treatment plant. Currently, researchers are at a 0.8% recovery rate, and they estimate that by reaching a 1% to 2% recovery rate, the rare earth elements would be recovered at a rate to allow for economic shipping. [Link](#)

IN OTHER NEWS

In Caribou, Maine, a riverfront redevelopment plan is delayed due to an industrial cleanup project of former steam and diesel power plants. The cleanup of the former facilities is estimated to cost \$3 million and take up to 10 years. [Link](#)

In Portland, Maine, a settlement has been approved for **Mallinckrodt U.S. LLC** to pay \$187 million for the remediation of mercury released by the former **HoltraChem** plant. From 1967 to the 1970s, the plant was reported to have discharged 6 to 12 tons of mercury to the Penobscot River estuary. The settlement is to be used for the remediation of the river and nearby communities. [Link](#)

In Pecos County, Texas, abandoned oil and gas wells have been left uncapped over the last several decades and are leaking contaminated water and hydrogen sulfide onto ranch land. One such well, Blair No. 1, has formed a body of briny water named Lake Boehmer in the West Texas desert. [Link](#)

CONTAMINATION

Duke and Appalachian State University researchers have detected coal ash in sediment at the bottom of five North Carolina Lakes. Researchers advanced cylindrical cores into sediment at the bottom of the five man-made lakes adjacent to current and former coal power plants and the researchers were able to gain a glimpse into how airborne ash particles settled over the past 40 to 70 years. [Link](#)

In the town of Uniontown, Alabama, residents have reported concerns from the 973-acre **Arrowhead Landfill** located near the town. The landfill's permit is under review for renewal by the **Alabama Department of Environmental Management**. If renewed, the permit will last until 2032 and will allow the landfill to receive up to 15,000 tons of trash per day. The landfill currently stores coal ash from the 2009 **Tennessee Valley Authority Kingston Fossil Plant** spill. [Link](#)



Mountain Island Lake, Huntersville, NC. [Link](#)



Lake Boehmer formed from abandoned well. [Link](#)

IN OTHER NEWS (CONT.)

Groundwater pumping for use in energy generation in Louisiana has allegedly led to subsidence in the ground in the Village de L'Est, near New Orleans, Louisiana. Prior to 2015, up to 11 million gallons of water were pumped from the ground for power generation at the **Entergy Michoud Power Plant**. Entergy has recently opened a new gas power plant that allegedly uses 99% less groundwater. [Link](#)