

ASH POND NEWSBYTES



November 2022

Dear Readers,

The following is a collection of ash pond news from the month of November 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 **United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)** announced a settlement with **Evergy** under the Coal Combustion Residuals Program. The settlement is in relation to Evergy's retired Tecumseh Energy Central coal power plant located in Tecumseh, Kansas. The settlement will mandate the assessment of nature and extent of coal combustion residuals (CCR) at a CCR impoundment at the site. Evergy will conduct groundwater sampling and install monitoring wells to determine if remediation is necessary. The company will also pay a civil penalty of \$120,000. In the settlement, the USEPA alleges that Evergy did not meet certain CCR program requirements. [Link](#)

The **USEPA** has denied several coal-fired power plants to discharge coal ash in storage ponds to induce rapid cleanup of site, including the **Lightstone Generation** Gavin Plant in Cheshire, Ohio, the largest coal-fired electricity producing power plant in the United States. Additionally, the EPA has shut down this request for at least five other plants in the Midwest. The EPA is in the process of rejecting extension on coal ash permits for the Clifty Creek power plant located in Madison, Indiana and the Ottumwa Generating Station in Ottumwa, Iowa. [Link](#)



Gadsden Steam Plant. [Link](#)

COAL ASH POND CLOSURE AND MODIFICATIONS

According to a report from **Earthjustice** and the **Environmental Integrity Project**, many coal ash impoundments nationwide are contaminating groundwater in violation of federal rules. Of 292 reported coal ash sites, 265 contain coal ash that is contaminating groundwater, and only 11 sites are working on plans to clean up the ash. Of the 265 affected sites, 123 denied responsibility for any contamination, while the other 142 either discuss possible cleanup options or simply monitor the contamination. The report recommends that these companies must find all coal ash on their sites and safely clean it up. The report also shows that over 200 facilities are closing down without removing unlined coal ash pits that can come in contact with groundwater. At least 15 sites in the nation have been shown to be contaminating drinking water wells. [Link](#)

The **Alabama Power Company** has announced plans to retire their oldest plant, the Gadsden Steam Plant, after 109 years of service. The plant was built to provide 10,000-kilowatt hours of power and closure is cited to be due to a focus on providing efficient and cost-effective electricity. [Link](#)

Closure plans for an estimated 23% of the 200,568 megawatts of coal fire capacity have been reported to occur by 2029, due to competition from natural gas and renewable energy sources. Closure plans span 24 states with Michigan, Texas, Indiana, and Tennessee having the most plants (42%) set to retire. [Link](#)



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Oil on turtles following the 2010 Kalamazoo River oil spill. [Link](#)

IN OTHER NEWS

In July 2010, 843,000 gallons of oil were spilled from a ruptured **Enbridge Pipeline** near Marshall, Michigan and covered approximately 35 miles of the Kalamazoo River. Turtles were the most rescued animals from the oil spill and new research has confirmed that following their rehabilitation, the turtles have had high long-term survival rates. Thousands of turtles were rehabilitated and eleven years later, the monthly survival probability has become nearly equal between those impacted and those not impacted. [Link](#)

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COAL ASH POND CLOSURE AND MODIFICATIONS (CONT.)

DTE Energy has filed a plan with Michigan state regulators that over the next two decades would retire their two remaining coal plants, Monroe Power Plant and Belle River Power Plant, and triple their renewable energy portfolio. The plan is projected to cost \$9 billion and will affect energy sources for 2.3 million customers. The plan is expected to reduce carbon emissions by 85% and will incorporate 15,400 megawatts of renewable energy from primarily solar and wind, providing funding for 1800 megawatts of battery storage. [Link](#)

Brown County, Wisconsin received \$10 million from the US Department of Transportation Maritime Administration's Port Infrastructure Program to redevelop the former **Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPSC)** coal plant site into a 40-acre port facility for the increased transportation of bulk cargo within Green Bay, Wisconsin. The county had already generated \$20 million in grants from other programs. Now with a total of \$30 million in funding, they are set to begin construction in 2023, which is estimated to last 3 years. [Link](#)

Xcel Energy recently announced a proposal to advance the retirement of coal operations at Tolk Generating Station in Texas to 2028, four years earlier than originally planned. The company is set to cease coal operations by 2030, following the retirement of their Comanche 3 coal unit. The decision to retire coal early was part of the company's commitment to their clean energy transition strategy. It is also estimated that doing so will save their Texas and New Mexico customers more than \$70 million. [Link](#)

The **Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)** has approved a pilot program to determine if closed coal ash storage sites can be repurposed for large, utility-scale solar projects. The \$216 million project is pending regulatory approval and would be aimed to repurpose the Shawnee Fossil Plant, near Paducah, Kentucky. TVA plans to use **Watershed Geo** and **ClosureTurf** technology for closure and solar mounting for this pilot program. [Link](#)



Rendering of TVA's Shawnee plant following proposed pilot program. [Link](#)