

# Electronic Filing: Received, Clerk's Office 10/02/2020 P.C. # 60

**From:** [Holly Fingerle](#)  
**To:** [Brown, Don](#)  
**Subject:** [External] Coal Ash Rulemaking  
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Good evening.

Thank you for holding this hearing. My name is Holly Fingerle, I am a volunteer community activist primarily with Indivisible in the South Suburbs of Chicago. I am not an expert. I am a concerned resident. I am a Mom. One of the things I know is that ignoring problems just make them worse. And once you make a mistake you do everything you can to make it right and then you change your behavior to keep from doing more harm. You have the power to set robust rules for clean up and to prevent future contamination that harms our water.

It is alarming the known extent of the groundwater contamination.

### **Permanent protection against coal ash pollution must be the standard for Illinois:**

I urge you to put in place standards for ALL ash dumps in the state, whether operating or abandoned. I urge you to make rules for not just impoundments but also coal ash landfills, dump fills, and re-use sites that are contaminating groundwater.

It is imperative you prohibit the dumping or burying of coal ash in places where it remains in contact with groundwater. I urge you to require dry handling and disposal of coal ash. A closure by cap that leaves coal ash in or exposed to rising groundwater is not acceptable.

In addition to dry handling and disposal of coal ash, the rules should also require:

- 1) Measures to limit air pollution during excavation and transport of coal ash.
- 2) Guidance on worker protection to prevent illness from coal ash exposure.
- 3) Consideration of environmental justice. Communities must not be abandoned by polluters who refuse responsibility for their pollution by blaming each other. Closure and clean-up plans must consider cumulative impacts of pollution on vulnerable communities.
- 4) Opportunity for meaningful public participation in permit decisions, and evaluations of compliance.
- 5) Public access to information about what happens to coal ash generated or stored in Illinois.

I have learned that robust closure option comparisons should include the following:

- 1) Predictions of how long groundwater pollution will continue for all closure options.
- 2) Detailed documentation, modeling, and predictions of whether coal ash will be contacted by groundwater after closure.
- 3) Cleanup. Groundwater must be cleaned up to unimpacted "background" quality.
- 4) Polluters must not be allowed to game the measurement system by placing "background" wells in coal ash or water already impacted by coal ash.
- 5) The polluters should be required to identify human exposure pathways, like drinking water wells and public water supply intakes, and test drinking water wells (public or private) when monitoring shows pollution above safe drinking water levels.

We know better, so we need to do better and protect our limited natural resources from hazardous carcinogens, toxins and pollutants in coal ash. It can be handled safely and responsibly without damaging our groundwater and scenic waterways. We must hold Illinois businesses to these standards. Thank you.

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Thanks,

Holly Fingerle

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