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To: [Brown, Don](#)
Subject: [External] Public Comment: AS 2021-03: Adjusted Standard for the Waukegan Station"
Date: Friday, March 15, 2024 10:59:50 PM

I am distressed about the long lasting harm caused by coal ash pollution in Waukegan and the Chicago region.

I am writing about "undue hardship" and why NRG must clean up all coal ash from its Waukegan site and mitigate the air and water pollution it has created.

NRG claims cleaning up their coal ash mess would be an undue hardship for them; therefore, residents must continue to bear the burden of the hazardous pollutants and accept the assaults on their lives.

How about the hardship on an asthmatic. Have you, a friend, or family member, had an asthma attack? If so, you may understand how an asthmatic feels.

If you have not suffered an asthma episode, or seen a child having trouble breathing, you may not fully understand. As a child, did you ever have a pillow fight with a friend who accidentally pressed your face into the pillow a little too long? Or did you go swimming and a friend playfully dunked you too long? You became scared and tried to fight back. You were afraid you were going to die. But thankfully, you did not.

During a flare-up, asthmatics do not feel that everything will work out. If medicine is readily available, it takes a while to work. If medicine is not available, hopefully someone is available to drive to the closest emergency room. Not an easy trip or experience. And, asthma attacks usually do not happen just once.

There are thousands of residents in the Waukegan area with asthma. They often struggle to breathe, miss school or work, cannot play outdoors or open the windows, or cannot sleep lying down. Asthma is just one disease connected to air pollution caused by coal ash.

Where is the disproportionate burden, with thousands of asthmatic residents or NRG?

Let's consider the groundwater and Lake Michigan. People throughout the Chicago region drink Lake Michigan water polluted from coal ash. Heavy metals cause untold number of diseases and medical conditions. This pollution did not happen due to an accident. It was and is ongoing, even though the dangers of coal ash in Waukegan have been known for decades. And yet the responsible parties have been allowed to ignore, or worse, deny or distort the facts.

Do not let this continue. Millions of people are at risk. The costs to them are both health and financial. Should they continue to carry these overwhelming burdens, or should the perpetrators be responsible for their actions?

Hold NRG accountable for their decisions. It is the right thing to do, and may discourage similar corporate bad decisions in the future.

Mary Mathews