BEFORE THE ILLINOIS POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: )
) No. R20-19
) (Rulemaking-Land)
Standards for the Disposal )
of Coal Combustion )
Residuals in Surface )
Impoundments: Proposed New ) 35 Ill. Adm. Code 845 )

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS held in the above entitled cause before Hearing Officer Vanessa Horton, called by the Illinois Pollution Control Board, taken by Steven Brickey, CSR, RMR, for the State of Illinois, 1021 North Grand Avenue East, Springfield, Illinois, on the 12th day of August, 2020, commencing at the hour of 5:00 p.m.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Okay. Good evening. Welcome to the Pollution Control Board public comment portion of this hearing.

My name is Vanessa Horton and I am the Hearing Officer for this rulemaking proceeding entitled Rulemaking for Proposed New 35 Illinois Administrative Code 845: Standards for the Disposal of Coal Combustion Residuals in Surface Impoundments. The Board docket number for this rulemaking is R20-19.

Hearings in this matter are being held in Springfield and via Webex on August 11th, 12th and 13th. The July 14th, 2020, Hearing Officer order designated times to be set aside for public comments and now is one of those times. This evening beginning right now we'll be hearing from members of the public in 15-minute segments. I've separated out the individual members of the public into 15-minute segments. I ask that you limit yourself to three-minute comments.

We will have a stopwatch here letting us know when three minutes has passed and I will politely let you know that time has passed. So we are beginning right now with the 5:00 to

[^0]5:15 segment and I'd like to call on Ms. Alice Englebretsen first. Ms. Englebretsen, are you there? If you're participating via Webex, you'll have --

MS. ENGLEBRETSEN: I am, yes.
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Wonderful.
MS. ENGLEBRETSEN: Can everyone hear me?

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes.
Please go ahead.
MS. ENGLEBRETSEN: Okay. All right.
My name is Alice Englebretsen and I live in Urbana, Illinois and I'm a long-time volunteer activist with the local Sierra Club. I'm also fortunate enough to live within 30 miles of the magnificent Kickapoo State Park and the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River, the only national scenic waterway in Illinois.

This river is a very precious
natural resource -- resource threatened now by the retired Dynegy fire and coal plant. The Dynegy coal plant let a very dangerous coal ash pond in the floodplain of this natural treasure and it is miserably leaking into the river. It must be

[^1]protected for ourselves and future generations. Dynegy made lots of money in the years of operation and should pay to clean up their use of this precious land and the valuable natural resource it is and it should not be the local taxpayers. The Middle Fork is a treasure and a public asset that best needs protecting. Your job is to regulate pollution. The coal ash along the Middle Fork is only one location where there are many dangerous pollution wastes and they are stored along river banks and other susceptible places.

But there are many more
high-risk coal ash plants than the one in the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River. I encourage the panel to consider this a moral issue and to protect the river from coal ash pollution for our future generations. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much, Ms. Englebretsen.

Moving on to Ms. -- sorry.
Moving on to Amy Kitzmiller. Are you on the line? If Ms. Amy Kitzmiller is on the line, you'll have to unmute yourself to speak. I'll skip over

Ms. Kitzmiller just for a second and I will return at the 5:15 mark.

Ms. April Sedall, are you on the line? Ms. April Sedall, S-E-D-A-L-L. Okay. If you're not participating via video and you're a call-in user, you can press Star 6 to unmute yourself.

MS. PRAGMORE: Okay. Now, I'm --
I'm just here to just attend.
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Just to
attend okay. And this was Ms. Sedall?
MS. PRAGMORE: No, this is Jan
Pragmore of the Middle Fork.
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Wonderful.
Okay. Thank you very much.
MS. PRAGMORE: I just --
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: I'm sorry.
We'll just mute you if you are just attending.
MS. PRAGMORE: Yeah. Right. I'll
just mute myself, too.
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Okay.
Thanks. I appreciate it.
MS. PRAGMORE: Thank you.
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Okay.

[^2]Ms. Arlene McFadden. Ms. Arlene McFadden, M-C-F-A-D-D-E-N. Okay. We'll move on. Ms. Barbara Beckler, are you on the line? Ms. Barbara Beckler. Okay. Moving on Ms. Carolyn -- I'm sorry. Carolyn Trimble.

MS. TRIMBLE: Yes, I'm here. I
think I've been muted myself. Can you hear me?
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes, we can
hear you great. Please go ahead.
MS. TRIMBLE: Thank you for allowing me to speak. When I was 10 or 11 years old and just learning to really clean my own room, I think that maybe if I kept the drawer closed or if no one looked under the bed or turned on the lights, the fingerprints and dust could escape notice. My mother quickly taught me otherwise. Hanging up my clothes and making my bed were not enough. Clean meant being able to withstand bright lights and scrutiny from all directions.

Now, the energy companies are trying my own tactics. Maybe if they just cover the wet ash containment ponds over or put a little more dirt or where chemicals are leaching out into the clean water, it will be good enough. It

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won't.
Near Danville, the Middle Fork
is a delightful river to canoe on. Going back after several years of absence we found something new. As we looked at the banks near the takeout point in Kickapoo Park, we were alarmed to see the body of colors of chemicals leaching into the river. The coal ash ponds from the Vermilion Power Station are so close to the river that the leachate seeps into Illinois' only national scenic river just above a spot where many people enjoy canoeing, rafting and splashing in the river water.

Capping in place is not a lasting solution. It does not address the pollution of the groundwater and, thus, all streams, rivers and lakes but what leaches out of these sides and the bottoms of the pit. Even linings are not designed to last forever and they don't. Cleanup is not complete until the ash is no longer wet and can no longer get into the water table. We need and deserve a permanent solution. Something guaranteed to keep coal ash away from our river and our air for 30 years means we have

[^3]just left the problem for our grandchildren.
While it is difficult now to get
the energy companies to pay to clean up their messes, in 30 years it will be impossible.

Cleanly stated, rules and standards must be set and clear mechanism for enforcement set out.

Permanent disposal of new ash as well as existing ash dumps, ponds, et cetera is requisite -- I couldn't hear you.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: You can
continue. It was just a little bit of feedback.
MS. TRIMBLE: Okay.
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: You can
keep going.
MS. TRIMBLE: Is requisite for
protecting the health of all wetlands. Thank you for allowing me to speak.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much, Ms. Trimble. All right. I'm going to go back to the people in this 15 -minute segment that we missed. First, Ms. Amy Kitzmiller and, again, if you are on video, on Webex, you can press the microphone button to unmute yourself. If you are calling in from your phone, you can
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press Star 6 to unmute yourself.
Ms. Kitzmiller. Okay. Moving on to April Sedall. Ms. Sedall. Okay. Moving on to Arlene McFadden. Arlene McFadden. Okay.

Moving on to Barbara Beckler. Ms. Beckler. Okay. I will go back to these four individuals at the end of the session and perhaps they will be on at that point, but no problem.

It's four minutes before 5:15, but I will start the 5:15 to 5:30 segment of names right now.

Is Krista Haberkorn on? Krista
Haberkorn, $\mathrm{H}-\mathrm{A}-\mathrm{B}-\mathrm{E}-\mathrm{R}-\mathrm{K}-\mathrm{O}-\mathrm{R}-\mathrm{N} . \mathrm{Okay}$. Christina Krost.

> MS. KROST: I'm here.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Great.
MS. KROST: Thank you. My name is
Christina Krost. I'm a Southern Illinois outreach coordinator for Faith in Place which is an interfaith environmental justice organization. I'm a person of faith, a mother and a concerned citizen. I appreciate the chance to submit my comments about why we need strong coal ash rules to protect human health and the environment for

[^4]all Illinoians.
My husband is a United Methodist pastor and in our denomination we move around to different churches as our bishop assigns. My family and I have lived in several communities around Illinois: Tuscola, Iola, Harrisburg and now Mattoon. In the eight years that we've lived and served in Illinois, we have never lived more than 35 miles away from a coal ash pond or a coal fired power plant.

I have three daughters and my oldest developed respiratory issues when we moved to Harrisburg, battling pneumonia twice in a one-year span. We tried medication, underwent testing, visited a pediatric pulmonologist, all great financial costs even with insurance, but that's another conversation.

I can't say that her problems related directly to the environmental impacts, but neither can $I$ dismiss it completely. As a mother and a person of faith, I believe I am called to love and protect my neighbor and help build healthier communities.

As I have done my research, I
have learned pollutants like thallium, cobalt, arsenic, boron, lithium and selenium are present at unsafe levels in coal ash pits and can leach into groundwater. These can cause reproductive and developmental problems, harm the heart, thyroid, cause cancer, neurological damage, low birth weight and stunted growth and all of these pollutants are toxic to plant and animal life.

I support the proposed rules like strong groundwater monitoring standards and worker protections for the creation of safety and health plans and thank you for including these key protections in the rulemaking so for, but I ask the IEPA and the Pollution Control Board to regulate coal ash dumps and fill in addition to impoundments.

By leaving them out of the rulemaking, we are only solving part of the problem. I'm asking for stronger worker protections like dust protection, exposure reduction and safe transportation of coal ash. The proposed rule uses the IEPA's EJ Start tool to identify environmental justice communities, but that tool leaves out some of the most impacted
communities. So the final rule should use the U.S. EPA's environmental justice screening to identify environmental justice communities.

Only then can we begin to account for cumulative impacts on sensitive or vulnerable population and please also consider ways to engage non-English speaking populations like offering interpretation at meetings and translation of materials. You have a chance to assure safe drinking water and clean air for my children and your children and the next generation to come by creating strong coal ash rules.

You must assure the communities are not abandoned by polluters who refuse responsibility for their pollution by blaming each other. Closure and cleanup plans must consider cumulative impacts of pollution on communities. Thank you for working to protect our shared land, air and water.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. Next, we have David Ullrich.

MR. ULLRICH: Thank you so much. My name is Dave Ullrich. I spent 30 years with the

[^5]U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Chicago, the last ten of which $I$ was Deputy Regional Administrator, which is essentially the Chief Operating Officer and then for 14 years I ran Mayor Daley's Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative.

Coal ash pits present a very significant risk to human health and the environment and I commend Illinois EPA for proceeding with regulations to implement the new law. Dam impoundments and impoundment failures of Michigan, Wisconsin, Tennessee, North Carolina Brazil and Colorado are clear evidence of the serious risks that is presented. The proposed rules are a good start, but need to be tightened. There need to be clear, understandable requirements that the regulated community can understand and that can be enforced.

First, no coal ash pits should be located in wetlands, floodplains, close to surface water or in a location where it could contaminate groundwater. Any existing pits in these locations should be closed and removed, if necessary. I highly doubt that five feet above

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the groundwater table is protected, especially in permeable soils.

Environmental justice
communities must be strongly taken into account on any siting. The standard should be no release of any contaminates to the groundwater, surface water or air. The regulated community can certainly understand that rule. Any release must require prompt corrective action and imposition of appropriate penalties.

A second violation must require closure in place or removal to a no discharge location and appropriate penalties. The requirements must apply to existing coal ash pits, whether operating or not, and to new pits. Design and construction must be of the highest quality and closely monitored and inspected by the regulators during construction and after.

Operation must also be closely monitored and inspected with meaningful frequent reporting by the operator. Closure and postclosure monitoring must be closely monitored by the regulatory agency and if problems arise, action taken.
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There must be adequate financial assurance that stays with the property regardless of ownership and for as long as there might be a problem. That might be forever. Illinois taxpayers should never be stuck with the bill. Stricter regulations are only as good as the willingness of the owners and operator to comply and the regulator to hold people accountable for violations. The current deplorable state of affairs with federal environmental regulations should not keep Illinois from protecting its people and natural resources. Thank you for this opportunity to speak today.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment, sir. Moving on to David Blood. David Blood, B-L-O-O-D. As a reminder, if you are participating on video, you can unmute yourself with the microphone button at the bottom of your screen. If you are calling in on the telephone, you can unmute yourself with Star 6. I'll move on to Donna Hriljac. I apologize for any mispronunciation. $\mathrm{H}-\mathrm{R}-\mathrm{I}-\mathrm{L}-\mathrm{J}-\mathrm{A}-\mathrm{C}$.

MS. HRILJAC: Yes, I'm here and if
you've got it right, I'd be absolutely shocked. HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you. Please proceed.

MS. HRILJAC: Okay. I'm writing to you as a person who has lived with coal ash my entire life. I was born on the southside of Chicago. At five years of age our family moved close to the Stickney plant and that was because my father worked close to it. My 11th birthday was spent in La Rabida Hospital. I was there with an autoimmune disease and I was there for over four months. I am a breast cancer survivor. Last year, my two sisters died. And I was not in the worst of worst places even though I was surrounded by coal ash piles.

My niece lives near the Waukegan plant. Waukegan has a large ash fill. The berm has been built out of coal ash and is located next to Lake Michigan. Pretty dangerous. Coal ash piles need to be cleaned up, removed and then covered safely. Many of us have lived and died complement to these plants. I hope it is time to put an end to these and thank you for the opportunity to speak. Thank you.

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HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. It's appreciated. Moving on to Eileen Borgia.

MS. BORGIA: My name is Eileen
Borgia. I live at 606 Lenox Court in Champaign, Illinois. I have a Ph.D. in early childhood education and taught for 40 years. I thought two important things were to teach them to use best practices and to advocate for the needs and rights of young children.

Recent neurological research suggests vulnerability of the young brain to polluted air and substances in their environment. Cancer-causing pollutants are lurking in toxic soups in more than 74 coal ash impoundments and landfills throughout the State of Illinois and can silently damage the growth and health of young children as we have already heard.

Also as a master naturalist, I
learned that cancer-causing pollutants are leaching into the Middle Fork River at Oakwood. My river where thousands of people, including children, paddle, float, splash, catch fish and float on inner tubes and enjoy the federally

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designated wild and scenic river.
People can see the orange leachate leaking out down the bank below the now closed Vermilion power plant. The owner, Dynegy, abandoned the facility after dumping tons of residue from coal production into inadequate storage pits that seeps into the groundwater eventually endangering everyone. It must be that Dynegy doesn't follow best practices in disposing all the waste in safely lined impoundments at a safe distance from the ever-changing bank of the Middle Fork River.

Potentially thousands of
children playing in the river have been exposed to mercury, cadmium, arsenic and other pollutants that can damage their developing brains and may lead to cancer and other early death.

In the future, even if they escape the devastation, they might grow into adults who will inherit the sins of the $20 t h$ century coal companies and they will have to continue to beg for removal of wet coal ash in ponds, groundwater, rivers and beaches in the Illinois -- of Illinois.

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Within input from advocates, communities, scientists and experts, leaders in the Illinois legislature designed a bill with strict standards for removal, both wet and dry, of all coal ash from the Earth in the State of Illinois.

After several years, the result
is that state bill -- State Bill 9 passed into law in 2019. Congratulations to all. Rulemaking is underway and I thank the state agencies; Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Agency and the Illinois Pollution Control Board for heeding the call of thousands of advocates that the rulemaking process must be transparent, set aside time for this testimony to be considered and for including public input in all reviews, approval of plans, programs and assessments.

Some of the proposed rules do need to be strengthened such as not lowering the standards for complete removal of coal ash.

Thankfully, the Coal Ash
Pollution Prevention Act does not permit the Illinois rules to be weaker than the Federal

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Rules. Here are some key protections written into the rules that I support.

First, comprehensive protections
for the health and safety of workers and the general public effective during cleanup and transportation of residual dust or fly ash. Second, not allowing companies to consider removal rather than require cleanup of all remains of wet and dry ash, monitoring for all relevant pollutants in the groundwater during every monitoring visit until the groundwater quality meets the groundwater protection standards.

Four, ensure that polluters, not taxpayers, pay for the closure and cleanup of all coal ash sites and provide that the Illinois EPA funds the needed money to properly oversee the closure and the cleanup. With strong, non-variable rules, the law in Illinois will ensure that coal ash will be removed completely making the environment safer for everyone, especially the smallest and most vulnerable, the children of Illinois. The time is now to have no coal ash, no way, no how in Illinois. Thank you. HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you

[^6]very much for your comment. I'm circling back to two individuals from this time segment. First Krista Haberkorn. Krista Haberkorn. Okay. And then David Blood. David Blood.

Okay. I note that we're a
little bit before the 5:30 to 5:45 segment, but I will start calling on the individuals in that section now and I will circle back at the end for the individuals that $I$ have called on, but were not yet on the line. Eliana Bernat.

MS. BERNAT: Hi. Can you hear me? HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes.

MS. BERNAT: Thank you. My name is Eliana and I am an incoming high school junior in Lake County, Illinois. I am here today to urge this Illinois Pollution Control Board to live up to its responsibility of protecting the people of Illinois by strengthening coal ash rules and promoting environmental justice.

I first want to talk about the situation in Waukegan. Waukegan is home to over a third of all the Superfund sites of Illinois. The Waukegan Generating Station, which is one of oldest coal plants in the country, has two active
unlined coal ash ponds along with an unlined landfill that pollute not only groundwater, but also ten million people's drinking water source, Lake Michigan.

The coal ash ponds and landfill make the Waukegan Generating Station the largest source of air and water pollution in Lake County. This is significantly impacting the health of the people of Waukegan. Toxic heavy metals such as arsenic, boron, chromium, lithium and sulfate are leached into the groundwater through the coal ash pond and landfill causing concentrations much higher than the safe level.

These toxic metals have many negative health effects, including cancer. This pollution is impacting the health of people right now and will continue to contaminate for centuries. The rules you have the power to enact will determine the level of pollution to which my generation has to endure directly impacting my generation's health.

It is not an accident that these disastrous impacts from coal ash are happening in Waukegan where the population is almost 75 percent

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black and Latinx. The prominence of fossil fuel plants and pollution in communities of color is a pattern perpetuated across Illinois and the country. The same harmful substance that is destroying the environment is also disproportionately harming the health of low income communities and communities of color. This makes pollution and coal ash regulations a racial justice issue.

As the Illinois Pollution
Control Board, you have the power to help the millions of people living in environmental justice communities like Waukegan. Ensuring that communities get permanent protection from pollution means prohibiting mixing coal ash and water and regulating coal ash dumps and landfills as well as ponds.

In addition, workers and
communities must be protected from the health effects of coal ash dust. I strongly urge you to stand with the people of Waukegan and communities over profit and polluting industries by strengthening coal ash regulations. Thank you. HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you

[^7]very much for your comment. We'll be moving on and I would just like to remind everyone on the line that if you are participating via video, you can hit the microphone button at the bottom of your screen and that will unmute yourself. If you are participating via telephone, you can press Star 6 and that will unmute yourself. Moving on to Elizabeth LaRue.

MS. LARUE: Hello?
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes,
Ms. LaRue.
MS. LARUE: Sorry. I couldn't tell if I hit it right or not. My apologies. Good evening. I am Elizabeth LaRue. I'm from Bartlett, Illinois. I am a mother and nurse and I support safe closure of coal ash impoundments, landfills and dumps to protect human health. We need to hold coal ash companies accountable and stop them from further contaminating our groundwater, rivers and lakes with this toxic brew.
Pollution already in our water
needs to be completely removed and standards set to prevent future polluting, not only for you and

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I, but also for our children, my two daughters, particularly from my point of view, and the many generations to follow.

The stories that others have shared should not have occurred, nor should they be repeated. We know too much now to ignore the results. Waste bi-product from burning coal contain toxic metals that can cause serious short and long-term health problems, including organ damage, reproductive and developmental issues, neurological effects and cancer. The impact is not only felt on a purely personal level, but also economically in terms of the high cost associated with healthcare delivery.

The coal ash sites across
Illinois have a disproportionately (audio cut out) as previously stated. They are also more likely to lack access to quality healthcare and that care is significantly more likely to be taxpayer funded. It is true that many health issues are the direct result of lifestyle choices. However, the ability to access clean, toxin-free drinking water and food is not something under our personal control, specifically when companies are not held
responsible for being good stewards of our water and environment.

An ounce of prevention (audio
cut out). Comprehensive cleanup of coal ash now will have positive effects on the health of Illinois residents and reduce downstream healthcare costs as a result. With this knowledge firmly in hand, why wouldn't the State of Illinois want to do everything possible to ensure this toxic waste does not continue to enter our drinking water and pollute our waterways now and in the future.

Responsibility for cleanup needs to sit squarely in the hands of the companies that are responsible for these coal ash sites, including coal ash landfills, ponds and dumps that are in operation and those that have already been abandoned. It has to be comprehensive. They need to be held accountable for ongoing cleanup and rehabilitation of the lands and waters polluting -- being polluted with their coal ash toxins. These companies need to be held financially responsible for these efforts.

This is not the responsibility
of Illinois residents and taxpayers. Illinois needs to safeguard the quality of its water resources and the health of its population. What is more valuable? The rules and processes by which this is done need to be transparent and exceedingly clear. No loopholes. Lack of clear and comprehensive rules will result in continuing and worsening contamination of our water. The rules need to be comprehensive and explicit. Everything possible needs to be done to keep coal ash from being wet wherever it is stored now and in the future.

Coal ash cannot be closed in if it is or will be wet at any time. In addition, there needs to be strong protections in place for workers and communities where exposure to dry coal ash is even remotely possible. Illinois has the opportunity to make rules that fully address an issue that can impact us all and will only worsen with time if insufficiently handled.

Anything less than explicit and comprehensive rules surrounding coal ash is unacceptable and, in my mind, constitutes negligence in the protection of Illinois residents

[^8]and our environment. This is my first time providing comment on an issue. I was compelled to speak because I believe that clean water is a basic right and we should do everything that we can to ensure that all people have access to it, not only in our drinking water, but all aspects of our environment. I sincerely thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for that comment. We will be moving on and a reminder you can unmute yourself with the microphone button at the bottom of your screen if you're on video or Star 6 on telephone.

And I ask that commentors limit themselves to three minutes today as we have many commentors. Ella Simms. Is there an Ella Simms, S-I-M-M-S? Okay. I will circle back at the end of this 15-minute segment for those that were not on. George Crouse, $\mathrm{C}-\mathrm{R}-\mathrm{O}-\mathrm{U}-\mathrm{S}-\mathrm{E} . \mathrm{Mr}$. George Crouse.

All right. Moving on to Gloria
Heggy, H-E-G-G-Y. Gloria Heggy. Moving on to
James Fallaw. James F-A-L-L-A-W. Again, if you're on telephone, you can unmute yourself by

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pressing Star 6. If you're on video, you can unmute yourself by pressing the microphone button at the bottom.

All right. I'll circle back to those I missed from this segment. Ella Simms, S-I-M-M-S. Ella Simms. Moving on George Crouse. George Crouse. Moving on Gloria Heggy. Gloria Heggy. And moving on to James Fallaw. James Fallaw.

Okay. I note we're a little bit before the 5:45 to 6:00 p.m. segment, but I will start calling on those individuals now. And just a reminder you can press the microphone button on your screen to unmute yourself or Star 6 if you are on the telephone to unmute yourself.

Please limit yourself to a
3-minute comment. Thank you. Jen Halbert. Jen Halbert. Okay. Jenica Hopkins. Jenica Hopkins. Jessica Blasingame. Jessica last name spelled B-L-A-S-I-N-G-A-M-E. Moving on. Joey Gage. Joey Gage. Moving on to John Katz-Mariani.

MR. KATZ-MARIANI: Good evening.
Can you hear me?
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes,
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Mr. Mariani. Please excuse me if I --
MR. KATZ-MARIANI: Yes.
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: -- said it
wrong.
MR. KATZ-MARIANI: Thank you. So my name is John Katz-Mariani. I lead the Green Team at Congregation Or Shalom in Vernon Hills in Lake County. Our Green Team receives support guidance and inspiration from Faith in Place, but I'm also here representing my congregation of 400 families in support of the people of Waukegan who are our neighbors. The Jewish tradition teaches many values, among them that we should love our neighbors as ourselves. We are all made in the divine image and we shall pursue justice whenever and wherever we perceive injustice.

It is unjust that the people of Waukegan, especially the children, our future, have to live in the midst of five Superfund sites. It is even worse that they have to experience toxins actively leaking into their water from coal ash. It is not a coincidence that Waukegan is mostly a Latinx and African-American community of working people as this pattern of environmental

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injustice towards communities of color is repeated all over Illinois and the entire country.

We note that Waukegan can speak for itself. We just want you to know that we stand with this community, that we are aware of what is happening there and that it is unconscionable to us that anyone would argue for the weakening of any coal ash related rule that would, if enforced, protect the community now and for the future.

We support the rules for groundwater monitoring, worker protections and no time-limit monitoring. However, the rules for cleanup must be firmer and cleaner. No wet ash wherever it is stored or closed in place. Cleanup must be complete such that no ash will have an opportunity to be exposed to water. No background wells in areas already impacted by coal ash. The rules for coal ash prevention should include coal ash landfills and dumps.

Workers in the community must be fully protected from coal ash dust which requires ongoing monitoring. The rule of cumulative impacts must identify all environmental justice
communities in order to fully account for the incremental effects of pollution on vulnerable people. The public must have access to all key documents and be consulted first before any plans are approved and finally no rollbacks if federal rules reduce protections.

Like anyone else, we raise our children with the expectation that they must learn to clean up after themselves. When they become adult members of the community, they have internalized the positive feeling and the just nature of not having left a mess for someone else to deal with. Would anyone from any tradition of good faith want their own children to play in or drink from a toxic mess created by adults to whom they have entrusted their lives? Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. Moving on to Joseph Laszlo. Joseph Laszlo. Mr. Laszlo. Mr. Laszlo.

MR. LASZLO: I see you're off mute. I can't hear you. You're speaking.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Mr. Laszlo, if you press the microphone button at the bottom of your screen, if you're on video, you can unmute

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yourself or if you're on telephone, you can press Star 6 to unmute yourself. Mr. Laszlo, I believe you are on the line. We can see you pop up in Webex. If you are having a little bit of trouble logging in, you can write to us in the chat function. We'll come back. Mr. Laszlo. Hello? Wonderful. We've got you.

MR. LASZLO: Can anybody hear me? HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Oh,
wonderful. Yes.
MR. LASZLO: Good. Thank you. My
name is Joe Laszlo. I am a member of Central Illinois Health Community Alliance. I live in Peoria near the soon-to-be-closed Edwards Power Plant. The Edwards coal ash pit is online and known to be leaching dangerous chemicals into the groundwater. I am concerned that the proposed rules prepared by the Illinois EPA for closing coal ash impoundments are too weak and do not ensure long-term protection from leaching toxins.
In particular, Illinois EPA's rules should explicitly state that coal ash cannot be closed in place if ash is or will remain wet. A site such as Edwards that is so close to a major

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waterway could never be considered remediated if the coal ash is allowed to be kept there. Of course, there are many other coal ash sites around the state that, similar to Edwards, are precariously situated near waterways.

Environmental group commentators have made specific and technical recommendations regarding refinements to the rulemaking regarding coal ash in contact with water that $I$ fully support. Let's get this done right the first time and not leave a toxic legacy for future generations. Thank you for this opportunity to address my concerns directly to you. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comments. I appreciate it. I will circle back to the commentors from the 5:45 to 6:00 p.m. segment. Jen Halbert. Jen Halbert. And, again, you can unmute yourself by pressing the microphone button at the bottom of your screen or if you're on the telephone by dialing Star 6. Okay.

Moving on to Jenica Hopkins.
Jenica Hopkins. Okay. Moving on to Jessica Blasingame. Jessica Blasingame. Moving on to

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Joey Gage. Joey Gage. And because I know that we're a little bit before the 6:00 to 6:15 segment I'll circle back to earlier individuals who were not on the line when called on.

Amy Kitzmiller? If you are on
the telephone, you can press Star 6 to unmute yourself. April Sedall. April Sedall. Arlene McFadden. Arlene McFadden. Barbara Beckler. Barbara Beckler. Krista Haberkorn. Krista Haberkorn. David Blood. David Blood. Ella Simms. Ella Simms. George Crouse. George Crouse. Gloria Heggy. Gloria Heggy. James Fallaw. James Fallaw. Jen Halbert. Jen Halbert. Jenica Hopkins. Jenica Hopkins. Jessica Blasingame. Jessica Blasingame. Joey Gage. Joey Gage.

Okay. I note we're a little bit before 6:00, but I'll move on to the 6:00 to 6:15 portion. Joyce Blumenshine. And if you are on video, you can unmute yourself by pressing the microphone button at the bottom of your screen. If you're on the telephone, you can unmute yourself by pressing Star 6 .

MS. BLUMENSHINE: Am I on unmute?

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Is this
Joyce?
MS. BLUMENSHINE: Can you hear me?
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes. Joyce
Blumenshine.
MS. BLUMENSHINE: Thank you so much. I appreciate it. Good evening, everyone. I'm Joyce Blumenshine. I'm a volunteer with Heart of Illinois Sierra Club in Peoria. I want to thank the IEPA and all staff for your continued work, especially with the challenges of COVID and, if anything, our pandemic time points out to us the importance of clean air and clean water.

My life here in Peoria has been
impacted in many ways by our coal ash at the Edwards plant close to town, but there are coal ash ponds and landfills and construction fills up and down the river. You know, this is a statewide problem from Lake Michigan all down the Illinois and to desperate far places and disparate places like Lake Coffeen in Montgomery County, which is used for public recreation and I hope that will continue.

> So the cleanup is essential and
here in Peoria I see concerns. I ask that you strengthen the financial assurances. It is really, really important not to risk the cost of cleanup for the future whether it's state or local governments or the federal government.

Companies need to be required to set aside adequate and secure financial assurances that the full cleanup can be completed and I think even a contingency fund for cost overruns. Those finances need to stay in place until the water quality concerns are complete and for us here in Peoria that's essential. Half of our public water typically comes from the Sankoty Aquifer which has fingers heading south towards Edwards.
It's not all in that area, but across the river is the Mahomet Aquifer, which is unconfined and the whole river system as we know with connections of the floodplain and our groundwater it is essential that sites not be left with coal ash or even the coal ash fills or landfills -- or landfills that cannot be left where they will be wet from groundwater or from flooding.

This public hearing is an
example, and a fine example, of incorporating the public into the process and I do thank you. I have been at way too many IDOT hearings and other agencies which $I$ won't mention that have, like, an open house forum where the public just wanders around to tables with posters and has to sum up the right questions to ask to certain staff.

The procedure you're doing is the right one and I really think you must specify within the regulations how the public hearing should be held for the sites that are under consideration, closure. It is really critical that there is a public forum and that there is an opportunity for the public to hear other comments, to hear a full explanation of the site that is understandable and also to hear other comments from their neighbors or other friends or people that they don't know.

This is a very important part of the democratic process. So I encourage you to specify that within the regulations. As part of that, too, I think you really need to expand the environmental justice definition. I hope that you will use what the definition is in the Clean

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Energy Jobs Act and also add to expand what you have to include the U.S. EPA environmental justice screening tool.

It is not fair to minority or underprivileged neighborhoods impacted by coal ash to leave any areas out and I hope that you will change that within the regulations.

I do also want to comment about the importance of protections for not only workers who are cleaning up the plant, but the transportation people going to the landfills and that landfill workers are also given protections and specific, excuse me, assurances of they will be fully instructed in the harms of coal ash and given protective gear. I am well-aware that there are sites within my area where landfills that are at old coal mines these people had no clue what they were doing with the coal ash or how it would affect them.

Thank you so much for your time tonight. I look forward to hearing further comments and I hope you will strengthen your regulations. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you
very much for your comment. We'll be moving on. Just a reminder, if you need to unmute yourself if you are on video, press the microphone button at the bottom of your screen. If you are on the telephone, it is Star 6 to unmute yourself.

Kathryn Dittemore. Kathryn
Dittemore. Okay. Moving on to Cody Czerwonka. I apologize if I'm mispronouncing, which --

MR. CZERWONKA: Yes, I'm here. It's Czerwonka.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Okay.
Thank you. Please proceed.
MR. CZERWONKA: Yeah. So like the people before me have already said, thank you to the IPCB for allowing me and everyone else a chance to offer some input into these coal ash hearings. I'm from the Cumberland/Coles County area in Central Illinois and I'm also running for state representative for the 110 th District.

I'm reminded every day of the
beauty of this state each time $I$ drive through rural Illinois. We have lakes and state parks that offer us natural beauty and Earth is our only home. We have to do everything that we can to

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protect it from the greed of the fossil fuel industry that wants to dump waste into our environment with as little regulations as possible, all in the interest of maximizing their profits and lining their shareholder's pocketbooks. Profits should never come above having a clean planet to live on.

Coal ash that is being dumped into these coal ash ponds seeps into our soil and, as a result, soil and our groundwater are being poisoned with heavy metals that are causing a host of problems like brain damage, cancer, learning disabilities, birth defects and reproductive defects. We're better than that and we can treat our Earth and our people much better than that.

Fossil fuel companies need to be pressured with more regulation so that coal ash in Illinois never comes in contact with our water. We must add a provision that requires the base of the surface impoundment to be no less than five feet above the highest groundwater elevation and that's measured within or adjacent to the coal ash impoundment. This will prevent any seepage from getting into the groundwater.

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Any selective remedy in the corrective action plan that the Board comes up with must also ensure that there is no intermittent recurring or sustained hydraulic connection between -- between coal ash and groundwater or surface water. The language must not be vague about allowing coal ash to remain in water. Rather than using terminology like reduce or eliminate to the maximum extent feasible, the rules should explicitly state that allowing ash to remain in water or allowing ash to be exposed to groundwater or surface water is impermissible.

The only way to truly control the source at releases and thereby prevent further contamination is to move coal ash to a place where it is not exposed to water. I urge this Board to add the location restrictions as prerequisites that explicitly must be met in order for the Agency to approve a closure in place. Just as coal ash in active impoundments should not remain in or exposed to water, the same is true following closure because even with a cap coal ash that is exposed to water will leach.

> Illinois must make it crystal
clear that closure in place may only be permitted if there will be no intermittent, recurring or sustained hydraulic connection between any portion of the coal ash impoundment in any groundwater following closure.

We can't continue to let the
fossil fuel industry pollute our Earth and until the federal government steps in to address the climate crisis we need to do what we can as a state. So please help save the future of Illinois and the future of our planet by adding and requiring these restrictions and regulations. Thank you, all, for your time.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. Kristin Camp. MS. CAMP: Hello. This is Kristin Camp.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes.
Hello.
MS. CAMP: I just want to make sure I was on. My name is Kristin Camp and I am speaking as a concerned citizen directly affected by coal ash. I am a life-long resident of Vermilion County, Illinois and I live

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approximately two miles from the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River.

A coal powered power plant operated there from 1955 through 2011 dumping coal ash in three ash pits all located on the floodplain of the Middle Fork River. This site now presents three major issues. Number one, there is ongoing pollution of groundwater that runs beneath the pits. Number two, there is direct pollution of the Middle Fork River itself through seeps that are hydrologically connected to the buried coal ash and, number three, is an extreme risk of catastrophic breach where massive amounts of coal ash could inundate the Middle Fork River.

As avid hikers, canoers,
fisherman and naturalists, my husband and I know the river and its floodplain intimately. While canoeing, I have actually witnessed the coal ash pollution seeping into the river for many years. Just the last month we have taken two kayak and canoe trips down the Middle Fork River with my siblings, daughter and grandchildren. While kayaking, we take care not to touch the water or

[^9]get out of the kayaks anywhere near the seeps by the coal ash pits or directly downstream.

If the coal ash is allowed to remain in these pits, the situation will only get worse. I have also observed how the river has meandered towards coal ash pits at an alarming rate. There is an ever-looming threat of a catastrophic breach along this stretch of the river during a flood event.

Not only have I shared the joys of the river with my family and friends, but as a lifelong formal educator $I$ have taken thousands of students on field trips to the river and the woodland along the floodplain.

As a science curriculum
coordinator for nearby Champaign School District, I collaborated with staff from the Illinois Geological Survey to design and implement the geology unit that incorporated field trips to Kickapoo State Park and the Middle Fork River.

For six years, all 800 5th graders in Champaign schools went on this field trip and got the opportunity to discover for themselves the joy of exploring the gravel bar

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while experiencing how erosion shapes the river. How much coal ash pollution can we allow to seep in the river before students can no longer join field trips there?

I have cited these examples to demonstrate the importance of the Middle Fork River to me personally and to the greater community and to emphasize the critical situation coal ash has presented to the health of our river.

In addition, coal ash pollution is seeping into the groundwater and many of the local residents get our drinking water from personal wells. Two of the largest sources of economic income for Vermilion County are agriculture and the park and natural areas in the Vermilion River corridor.

> If a breach would occur along
the coal ash pits, tons of coal ash pollution would spill into the river, float downstream through most of the park, the City of Danville and on into Indiana. This would be catastrophic not only to the ecosystem of the river floodplain, but to the Vermilion County economy.
I expect the Illinois Pollution

Control Board to provide strong coal ash rules that protect all the people of Illinois from coal ash pollution in perpetuity. Particularly, the rules must ensure the coal ash, wherever it is stored, does not get wet now or in the future, that coal ash cannot be closed in place if the ash is or will remain wet and that the requirements for cleaning up groundwater pollution must be clear that clean up will not be treated as complete until ash is no longer exposed to water.

This is our opportunity for
Illinois to be a leader in the nation and model the pathway for protection for coal ash pollution. I appreciate you letting me comment. Thank you very much.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. Moving on and a reminder if you are participating via video you can unmute yourself by pressing the microphone button on your screen. If by telephone, by pressing Star 6. Lan Richart.

MR. RICHART: Yes. Can you hear me?
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes, we
can.

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MR. RICHART: Yes. Can you hear me? HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes, we
can.
MR. RICHART: Okay. All right.
Good evening. My name is Lan Richart and I am a co-director of the Equal Justice Collaborative, an environmental non-profit, located in Champaign. I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening.

Section 22.59 of the Coal Ash
Pollution Prevention Act stipulates that the rules must specify meaningful public participation procedures. The word meaningful was included in the act for a purpose, to ensure that stakeholders and interested individuals play a meaningful role in the decision-making process.

Prior to establishing the Equal
Justice Collaborative, my wife and I served as owners and principals of a land use and environmental planning firm in the Chicago area where we specialized in the implementation of agency public involvement programs for major public works projects throughout the Midwest.

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\text { Based on nearly } 30 \text { years of }
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experience in this area, it's my opinion that meaningful public participation requires several key elements and tonight $I$ want to very briefly address two. One is making process open and assessable to all stakeholders and interested parties and the second is being transparent, making key documents and information used in the decision-making process readily accessible and providing adequate time for review and comment.

Meaningful public participation
is impossible without information. Sufficient time to review relevant decision-making documents is essential in giving legitimacy to the meetings or hearings. Thirty days is a minimal timeframe if you really want people to be aware of the meeting, understand what is being proposed and provide meaningful feedback. Less than that and you are merely checking off a box, not really interested in meaningful participation.

This principle should be applied to the pre-application public meeting where currently only 14 days notice is proposed. You can be assured that you will get no meaningful input with this short timeframe and with little to
no advance information available.
My second comment tonight relates to the opportunity for public hearing and in Section 22.59 Subsection G6 of the Coal Ash Pollution Prevention Act it says the rule must include an opportunity for a public hearing prior to permit issuance. As currently written, the Agency's proposal states that they may hold a public hearing on the issuance or denial of a permit whenever the Agency determines that there exists a significant degree of public interest.

I would suggest that defining the specific circumstances under which a public hearing would be provided is not unreasonable, such as when there's a significant degree of public interest. However, giving the Agency additional undefined discretion is not consistent with the intent of the law. I believe the language should be changed to the Agency shall hold a public hearing when it is determined there exists a significant degree of public interest and/or there is a reasonable likelihood of significant adverse -- of significant adverse impacts resulting with the proposed rule.

[^10]I want to thank you for the opportunity to make these two points and we'll be submitting more detailed comments in writing.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. Moving on Laura Davis.

MS. DAVIS: Yeah. I'm Laura Davis and thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. I am with the League of Women Voters Illinois, climate and energy issues specialist, and League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization and it has several positions which support protection of water, land, air and the safest management of waste products.

As coal ash is a waste product
from coal power plants and known to contain chemicals such as arsenic, lead, mercury, thallium, chromium and other chemicals known to be dangerous to human and animal health, the most stringent laws need to be put in place to clean up current sites include existing coal -- including ash ponds, landfills, dumps and impoundments.

The League of Women Voters supports that existing coal ash be required to be

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removed from locations that are close to groundwater, rivers or lakes and particularly unlined landfills or ponds in order to prevent the migration of these dangerous chemicals into water and not allow coal ash ponds to be capped. The groundwater around any coal ash pond should be monitored until safe water results are achieved rather than monitoring determined by a specific end date.

League of Women Voters Illinois supports the strongest protection for workers and communities around the coal ash ponds for continued care and during removal of coal ash. Workers and communities are vulnerable to coal ash dust and pollution which is dangerous to health and has been shown to contribute to cancers, kidney problems and nervous system diseases.

The League of Women Voters
Illinois believes that the investment in prevention of danger such as collapse of the coal ash pond or leakage of dangerous chemicals into groundwater, rivers, streams or lakes is the responsible and safe approach in order to protect our water, land and the health of our communities.

[^11]Thank you very much for taking this time and allowing us to speak.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much, Ms. Davis. Moving back to Kathryn Dittemore if you are on the line. Kathryn $\mathrm{D}-\mathrm{I}-\mathrm{T}-\mathrm{T}-\mathrm{E}-\mathrm{M}-\mathrm{O}-\mathrm{R}-\mathrm{E}$.

Okay. I note that it is a
little bit before the 6:15 mark, but we'll move on to that section. Laura Hansen. And as a reminder, if you are participating via video, you can press the unmute -- press the microphone button to unmute yourself and if you are participating via telephone, you can press Star 6 to unmute yourself. Is Laura Hansen on the line?

Okay. Moving forward to Laurie Willets. Laurie Willets, W-I-L-L-E-T-S. Okay. Moving forward. Leah Hartung.

MS. HARTUNG: Yes, I'm here.
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Great.
Please proceed.
MS. HARTUNG: My name is Leah
Hartung and I am a college student from
Libertyville, Illinois. I've spent my whole life in Libertyville and while $I$ live on the largest

[^12]group of freshwater lakes on Earth, my drinking water is still not safe because of the coal ash from the Waukegan power plant.

Since groundwater monitoring began in 2010, the groundwater at the Waukegan power plant has been found 400 times to have contaminates related to coal ash above allowable levels. This is unacceptable. Safe drinking water is a human right, not a privilege. The health of millions of Illinois residents (audio cut out) coal ash impoundments and not coal ash fill and old coal ash dumps, yet the monitoring wells at the Waukegan site the contaminants are leaching from the coal ash dumps, not impoundment.
If coal ash fills and old coal
ash dumps are not included in the bill or the rules, the coal ash will cause disastrous health effects as it leaches heavy metals and other toxins into our drinking water. Additionally, while the coal ash impoundments at the Waukegan plant are lined, the liner isn't up to standards and even high-quality liners can crack and leak.

The only possible way to ensure that coal ash does not cause serious health

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problems through our drinking water is to prevent it from getting wet. Coal ash, therefore, must be required to be removed from wet ponds to dry, lined landfills. While the removal of coal ash to dry, lined landfills is necessary, so are the protections for workers that do so. The health and safety of the coal ash workers are crucial to ensure -- and to ensure their health and safety there has to be increased monitoring of coal ash dust and robust safety and health measures.

Lastly, the negative effects of coal ash disproportionately impact marginalized communities. Therefore, for any coal ash to be fair and just, they need to prioritize environmental justice communities. Language access is crucial. The Illinois EPA and the industry must be required to engage with non-English speaking populations, including interpreters being at the meetings, hearings and translation of permit materials.

Thank you for allowing me the time to speak today. I hope you will strengthen your regulations.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you
very much for your comment. Moving forward. Just to note if you are video, you can press the microphone button to unmute yourself. If you are on telephone, Star 6 to unmute yourself. Leon Liebenberg. Leon Liebenberg.

MR. LIEBENBERG: Yes, thank you for this opportunity. Sure. We're in the middle of a pandemic and I'm not talking about the COVID-19 pandemic. I'm talking about the pandemic that we call economic growth and its adverse environmental and societal effects.

So either we'll have to change our narrow-scoped ways or, like other plagued species, we will reap the deadly crop of the seeds that we sew. My brother was poisoned by mercury which apparently seeped into groundwater from nearby platinum and gold mines. He sustained permanent nerve damage. Who knows what other consequences will still arise. So my brother lives in Potchefstroom, which is about 120 kilometers from Johannesburg, South Africa where I'm from.

Now, being poisoned following blatant disregard of proper engineering practices
is not uncommon -- uncommon in a developing country like South Africa. Just, by the way, thousands of other people were also poisoned by that very same mercury that leached into the groundwater. No one would assume responsibility and it was too difficult to pinpoint the exact source of the groundwater contaminates. So that's kind of the easy way out for utilities and such evasive maneuvers might be expected in developing countries where the focus is on relentless growth with very little regard for well-being, but such irresponsible and unethical actions are certainly not expected from the world's wealthiest country. It is quite shocking to learn about the disregard of proper engineering practices in the U.S. regarding the disposal of coal combustion residuals. The resulting pollution of our rivers, water tables, among others -- this not only pertains to the surface impoundments of coal ash, but certainly also to coal ash landfills.

I took some of my students, engineering students, to the Mount Carmel Coal Landfill -- coal site, open coal mine, where they
also do land reclamation, scary stuff, scary stuff going on there. But, luckily, there are a few examples of sound land reclamation practices. It's encouraging to learn some utilities are cleaning up their acts like in South Carolina and Virginia.

I'm dumbstruck that coal ash is
still not safe to dispose of in most of the thousand or so ash dump sites in the U.S., especially since coal ash -- coal ash contains higher concentrations of mercury than those that caused my brother's poisoning. I shutter to think what the several other toxic heavy metals like arsenic, cobalt, lithium, uranium, you name it, associated with coal ash is doing to our groundwater and to us.

I believe our failures in
transgressions with dry storage of coal ash landfills and wet storage in ponds cannot be ascribed to lack of knowledge. That's not due to lack of knowledge. I think it's due to ineffective company management, greed, unacceptable and unethical engineering practices, non-enforcement of regulations and seemingly
endless legal disputes and social empathy. These are some of the reasons why we are failing our own nest.

Finally, during most of the workings of things appear to occur not for lack of, but because of rational actions. I think that addressing our coal ash dilemma, along with our many other sustainability challenges, suggest a blending of rational sort and feeling, that magical evaluative ethical function that we have feeling. Solving this dilemma will also require diversity, open mindedness and the capacity to learn and change. Surely we can achieve that. I'd like to thank the Illinois EPA for the wonderful work that you're doing and I wish the very best in the future. I thank you for your attention. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. Moving on to Linda Englund. And as a reminder, to unmute yourself if you are on video, you can press the microphone button at the bottom of your screen or if you're on the phone, Star 6. Linda $\mathrm{E}-\mathrm{N}-\mathrm{G}-\mathrm{L}-\mathrm{U}-\mathrm{N}-\mathrm{D}$.

Okay. Moving forward with Linda

Scott. Linda Scott. Okay. Circling back to the individuals missed from this 15-minute segment Laura Hansen. Laura Hansen. Moving on to Laurie Willets. Laurie Willets. Linda Englund. Linda Englund. Then Linda Scott. Linda Scott.

Okay. I notice we are a little bit before the 6:30 mark, but $I$ will proceed to that 15 -minute segment now if any of those individuals are on and, if not, I'll circle back to ones that we may have missed before.
Going with Lisa Velez. I'll
remind everyone that you can unmute yourself on video by pressing the microphone button or on telephone by pressing Star 6. Lisa Velez. Okay. Moving on the Mary Ellen DeClue.

MS. DECLUE: Can you hear me?
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes, please proceed.

MS. DECLUE: Thank you. My name is Mary Ellen Declue. I want to thank the Pollution Control Board and the Illinois EPA. You have an extremely important task. Your responsibility is to protect citizens and communities from the toxicity of coal ash. From the federal scene,
health protections from coal ash disposal are lacking which place even more responsibility on you.

I live in Litchfield near
Carlinville, Shay No. 1 Mine, the Coffeen Power Plant and the Deer Run Mine in Hillsboro. My background includes 15 years of medical research and 15 years of teaching chemistry and hopefully water quality to my students. The coal industry, including coal fire utilities and coal mining, have dominated public policy for decades, but hopefully not the future.

Coal ash rulemakings must ensure not only a safe and healthy future for citizens, but also correct some invalid rulings of the past. Coal ash is a highly hazardous waste that is being used in a careless manner to benefit the coal industry at the demise of health and safety in Illinois communities.

Coal mining in Illinois has a sacred cow status that has damaged communities and health of citizens. The present coal ash rules do not include coal slurry impoundments that have been the disposal sites for millions of tons of
coal ash imported both from Illinois and out of state coal fire utilities.

The Shay No. 1 mine was allowed to accept coal ash deposits which they call coal combustion bi-products or beneficial use of coal ash. They were allowed to place millions of tons in unlined refuse impoundments that have contaminated ground and surface waters for decades. These impoundments will continue to receive more coal ash as scheduled in the reclamation plant. The placement of coal ash in coal mines -- in coal mines is a backdoor way to dispose of toxic coal ash that enhances profits for the coal-fired utilities and coal mines while exposing central community water resources to unhealthy contaminants.

The test method ASTM D3987-85, which is used to certify whether coal ash can be used as coal combustion bi-products it assumes that to be valid or predicting this test is suited to predicting the solubility and leaching of contaminants from the coal ash. The problem is that placing coal ash permanently in place that are exposed to water from varying sources negates

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the validity of this test.
A limited time test in a
laboratory is not representative of what happens in nature. The Le Chatelier Principle determines the steady state equilibrium that exists between a concentrated material and the effluent surrounding the material. The cap in place will not stop pollution of groundwater.

The closed Coffeen Power Plant coal ash ponds have polluted groundwater at levels unacceptable for healthy outcomes. A closure plan for Ash Pond 1 is to dewater and cover with a clay soil cover and vegetation to minimize or eliminate infiltration of liquids. The closure plan for Ash Pond 2 has been approved by Illinois EPA and will again be a cap in place.

Coal Ash Pond 2 is leaking coal blood -- I'm sorry -- cobalt at 70 times the safe standard of 0.006 milligrams per liter. Excess cobalt is known to harm the heart, blood, thyroid and other vital organs in the body. These coal ash ponds are next to Coffeen Lake which is used for recreation, fishing, et cetera.

The problem for citizens in the

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area is that cleanup requirements is not protecting them from exposure to unhealthy well water and surface waters. Cap in place does not protect citizens living near them. Their community has a forever health and environmental hazard for them and their families. We need your help along with the Illinois EPA. Thank you for your efforts and you are appreciated.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. Moving on to Mary Jadernak.

MS. JADERNAK: Hi. Can you hear me? HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes, please proceed.

MS. JADERNAK: Thank you for your important attention to this really important situation in our environment and thank you for listening today.

My name is Mary. I was born in
Illinois. Currently, my husband and I are Illinois taxpayers and voters and Illinois is our home. The -- sorry. Our state house passed legislature bi-partisanally and unanimously to clean up the coal ash in our state and it was a

[^13]bi-partisan effort. Surprisingly, people found out how much coal ash was in their district and they didn't want to have coal ash disasters in their district.

Now, I think you probably know what the best practice is and, if you don't, there are so many experts that have just testified today like David Ullrich and -- that can tell you, like, exactly what is good engineering.

My history I'm a retired
healthcare worker and it was interesting to hear one of the earlier people talk about how ill they were having grown up on the southside of Chicago near the Stickney coal plant and as a healthcare worker I had a client who ended up committing suicide because he didn't want to burden his family because he had a severe -- he had cancer that was going to cause him to lose capacity to function and he was a worker at the Stickney Power Plant.

And so, you know, it's just recently -- it's unacceptable that people are not -- these industries are not cleaning up after themselves and I'm outraged. I am outraged that

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we should have all these contaminates in our backyard, in our home. I mean, there is no place like home until you have a coal ash disaster in your backyard. That includes being secretly poisoned over the years because your water is contaminated.

In 2008, the Tennessee Valley had a big coal ash disaster. In 2011, Wisconsin had a coal ash disaster. They knew about their problems with their coal ash and they ended up just being so casual to dump all that coal ash into Lake Michigan which is part of their Great Lakes. That's the second world's largest source of fresh drinking water for millions of people. How irresponsible. I am just outraged. 2014 North Carolina had dumped coal ash into the Dan River. Seventy miles downstream people's communities were affected by toxic forever chemicals in that river that affected the value of people's property.

Now, you probably wouldn't have million dollar homes on Lake Geneva if there was a coal ash dump on Lake Geneva. You know, this company in Danville isn't even an Illinois

[^14]company. It has billions of dollars in reserves. Why can't you have someone cleanup properly after themselves? I urge you to please -- you know, there is no place like home. Illinois is my home and this planet is our home. Please be a hero of our day and set strong regulations into perpetuity to protect citizens. Thank you very much for listening.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. Moving on. Just to note if you are participating via video, please use the microphone button at the bottom to unmute yourself or if you're on the telephone Star 6 and please limit yourself to a three-minute comment. Up next is Mary Matthews.

MS. MATTHEWS: Hello.
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Please proceed.

MS. MATTHEWS: I'm Mary Matthews. I'm a director with the League of Women Voters of Lake County. Four-and-a-half years ago I testified on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Lake County and I'm back today to follow up again and advocate for strong regulations

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regarding coal ash. It is polluting our air, water and harming our health. Coal ash contains toxic metals including arsenic, boron, chromium, lithium, sulfate and more. The toxins in coal ash can cause cancer, heart disease, lung and kidney disease and birth defects.

Illinois is one of the worst states for pollution from coal ash. Because of the federal government's withdrawal from environmental protection, strict measures are called for at the state level. Robust and enforceable rules for the Coal Ash Pollution Prevention Act must require the safe disposal or storage of coal ash, actively involve the public and promote a helpful environment.

In Waukegan, Lake County,
Illinois, sited next to Lake Michigan is NRG's subsidiary Midwest Generation coal burning power plant. For decades, coal ash has been stored in impoundments or historical coal ash storage areas.

The toxic coal ash is
contaminating the groundwater and the drinking water locally and for millions of residents in Illinois and surrounding states. We need to stop
future contamination and clean up the pollution already in our water caused by these active and inactive coal ash dumps. In order to protect the groundwater's chemical integrity, rules for clean up and the closure of coal ash sites must provide permanent protection from coal ash pollution.

When coal ash gets wet, heavy metals drain into the groundwater. Even ponds with high quality liners have leaked due to cracks or tears. Rain on coal fill leach metals into the groundwater. Cleanup cannot be considered complete as long as the coal ash can get wet. This applies to not only the impoundments, but also to coal ash landfills, dumps and scatter fill.

As Waukegan is considered an environmental justice community, it should receive priority in closure of impoundments. To facilitate the decision-making process, the League believes that public understanding and participation are essential. The public has the right to know about pollution levels, dangers to health and environment and proposed policies and options.

[^15]Accordingly, the rules should include expanded outreach and require that opportunities, materials and documents be made available to non-English speaking stakeholders. Additionally, hearings should be held in easily accessible locations at convenient times and, when possible, in the area concerned. The League supports inspections and monitoring and is pleased with the proposed rules regarding the frequency of monitoring and its continuation until groundwater meets the protection standards. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you
very much for your comment. Moving on to Nancy Long. If Nancy Long is on the line. Moving on to Nya Flowers.

MS. FLOWERS: Hello. My name is Nya Flowers. I am a senior at DePaul University studying global health with a minor in biochemistry. I am currently interning with Faith in Place this summer. I am here today to express urgent concern for the health and safety for coal ash ponds, cleanups and public access to documents along with having a safe space for communities to voice their opinion in these decisions.

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With coal ash being the toxic remains of burning coal giving off contaminating harmful substances such as arsenic, lead, lithium and so much more, this will have a devastating effect on the communities surrounding these coal plants. These chemicals cause cancer, developmental disorders, reproductive problems and so much more and it is very poisonous to our air and contributes to part of the reason why the American Lung Association gave Lake County the grade of an $F$ in air quality in 2017, along with being poisonous to our water.

Closing these plants and holding companies accountable for a proper cleanup of these coal plants is crucial for not only the environmental justice communities, but beneficial for Illinois to become the leaders in renewable energy efforts. A proper cleanup should ensure no wet ash, clear and concise closure standards for coal ash impoundments, cleanup of groundwater that has been polluted from coal ash impoundments, checking that there are no coal ash contaminated background wells, also include cleanup of coal ash fills and dumps.
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With this being said, it is
essential for communities to be able to publicly put their input in all plans, programs, assessments, reviews and approvals of what is going on in their community. This starts with companies and elected officials being transparent with their communities, access to documents and a safe place for community members to give their input. Thank you so much.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. Circling back to Lisa Velez. If Lisa Velez is on the line. V-E-L-E-Z. Moving forward to Nancy Long. Nancy Long.

Okay. I note we're a few minutes before the next segment which starts at 6:45, but I'll begin and see if anyone is here from that section. As a reminder, if you are participating via video, you can unmute yourself by pressing the microphone button at the bottom of the screen or if you're on telephone, by pressing Star 6. First, Pamela Richart.

MS. RICHART: Yes, I am here. My name is Pam Richart and I am the other co-director of Equal Justice Collaborative, an environmental
non-profit located in Champaign, Illinois. I, too, want to thank you for offering the opportunity to provide input.

My organization has been advocating for the removal of coal ash from leaking impoundments along Illinois' national scenic river for five years. The ripping away of gabions installed to protect the ash from the erosional forces of the Middle Fork has exposed visible signs of coal ash pollutants seeping into the river and epitomizes why coal ash stored in floodplains or ash that comes into contact with water should never be allowed and I have four short comments.

First, coal ash, as you've heard tonight, is one of the most toxic substances known. The rules as drafted do not protect lakes, streams, rivers, groundwater in Illinois communities and often the drinking water from coal ash stored in areas where it mixes with water. So I urge you to adopt rules that prohibit any plant that allows ash to come into contact with groundwater. Ban impoundments from floodplains because rising floodwaters can cause the ash to

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move through the berms into surface waters.
Ensure there is no intermittent reoccurring or sustained hydraulic connection between ash and groundwater or surface waters and in locations where the ash is known to be mixing with groundwater or surface water, as it is along the Middle Fork, the rules should require removal.

Second, do not accept closure in place where impoundments pose significant risks. Impoundments in a stable area, seismic areas, wetlands and floodplains can pose a significant risk if they collapse or where there is a breach and threat of a breach of those impoundments built in the Middle Fork's floodplain is very real. We know breaches have happened in other states with devastating consequences.

Third, financial assurances should stay with the property and remain in place as long as an impoundment exists or poses a threat. The taxpayer never should be required to pay for cleanup or removal. And, finally, the rules do not require a CCR permit applicant to submit specifics related to things like hazard potential classification, emergency action plan,

[^16]structural stability, safety factor assessments, fugitive dust control plans, safety and health plans and these plans propose an assessment in their support documentation are intended to provide fundamental protections prescribed by SB 9.

They should be required and they should be made available for public review and comment. Yesterday, I heard the EPA justify exclusion based on overlapping jurisdictions, but unless these plans, assessments and support documentation are submitted as part of the permitting process the EPA will not have jurisdiction oversight or enforcement capabilities.

This exclusion is unacceptable for these reasons, but it also denies community review and input of proposals that directly affect them and makes it impossible to determine who has authority for enforcement.

So, in conclusion, I urge the
Pollution Control Board to strengthen the rules and ensure a process that allows communities meaningful input on all aspects of a closure plan.

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Without that, you're putting their health and safety and our water at risk.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you. Thank you very much for your comment. Moving on to Pete Plescia. Pete Plescia, P-L-E-S-C-I-A. Okay. I'll circle back later. Moving on to Rachel Tompkins.

MS. TOMPKINS: Yes. Can you hear me?

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes, please proceed.

MS. TOMPKINS: Okay. Thank you for this opportunity to speak. My name is Rachel Tompkins. I am a clinical psychologist. I'm a member of the Edwardsville area League of Women Voters and I'm chair of the Edwardsville Coal Cities Committee. I am a nature lover, I am a kayaker and I am a proponent of conservation clean air and clean water initiatives.

I live close to the Mississippi River and I am writing and speaking out of concern specifically about the Wood River Power Plant on the Mississippi. I am also aware that other coal ash storage facilities around the banks of the

[^17]Illinois, Vermilion, Des Plaines River and on the banks of Lake Michigan.

When coal ash storage
impoundments or ponds are wet, especially when threatened by the flooding of these rivers as happened last year to the Mississippi as we can all recall, dangerous toxins are washed into riverways. Even when not in flood, dangerous toxic chemicals leach into groundwater and drinking water sources such as from the five coal ash storage impoundments of sizes up to 40 acres at the Wood River Power Plant. This was sold to a developer.

It is critical that these impoundments be removed as storage in place can never be safe on the banks of a river as the point was already made, and adequate that they be removed and adequately stored and capped securely in a safer location. Workers doing this work need to be protected from toxic dust into which they will come into contact. Workers that remove coal ash in Tennessee in 2008 became sick and four workers died.

The company, which profited from
the process which produced the coal ash, needs to be held responsible for a permanent solution for this hazard. I'm asking that you, with our rules, hold them responsible with ongoing groundwater monitoring, no contaminated background wells. I appreciate that our state passed a good law in $S B$ 9. We now have to be careful to guarantee that the rules are written to ensure that the regulations are clear and protect citizens from the effects of toxins and neurotoxins such as arsenic, boron, chromium, lead, thallium -- and thallium in our recreational and drinking water. Thank you very much for your time and attention.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. Moving on to Sandra Loftus. If Sandra Loftus is on the line. As a reminder, you can unmute yourself if you are on video by pressing the microphone button at the bottom of your screen or if you're on the telephone --

MS. LOFTUS: Can you hear me? HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes, please proceed.
MS. LOFTUS: It gave me a different
direction on my screen. It told me to hit the spacebar.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Okay.
MS. LOFTUS: I thought I would pass that to you. Hello. Good evening. My name is Sandy Loftus. I am a retired public schools science teacher. I have 20 years under my belt teaching science and I have a background in clinical pathology which $I$ worked for 18 years prior to teaching. I am also a member of the Kaskaskia Sierra Club, a fairly new member. I currently live in Granite City, a community that is being directly affected by coal fly ash at this very moment which is why I wanted to speak tonight.

Coal is being burned here nightly under the cover of dark to produce coke, the material added to molten iron to make steel. My husband and I made the decision 18 years ago to move back to our childhood hometown and to live here in our retirement. We purchased and renovated a house that will turn a hundred years this year. We absolutely love our home. Even looking at the steel mill blast furnaces from our

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back bedroom window, we love our home.
We did not have our eyes closed when we chose to live here. We knew there were measures put in place to reduce pollutants in the air and why we know that is that both of our fathers played a role in helping to identify the pollutants that were being kicked out through the steelmaking process and we watched restrictions, of course, over time that helped reduce that in our immediate environment, but over the last couple of years with the lifting of those restrictions we can see with our own eyes the visible, black soot accumulating on our window sills.

The long-term suspension of particles in the air have made a dark stain running directly under the eves around the entire house, but mostly on the side facing the steel mill. I try not to think about what it is doing to our bodies. As you all continue through this process to debate the containment of CCR, I ask that you all simply do the right thing.

There is nothing good about coal ash and it all needs to be contained. I would

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like to end with a wish and question. I wish it was in the power of the Illinois EPA to designate coal ash as a hazardous waste. And my question, will the coal ash created via the production of steel be included in this containment process or is it limited to just power utilities? Thank you for your time.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. It is appreciated. Moving on to Stephanie Bush-Taylor.

MS. BUSH-TAYLOR: Absolutely. I thank you for the opportunity to address you this evening on such a very, very important issue. I would like to start by saying that I am the President and Executive Director of Community Development Sustainable Solutions, which is a smart green grassroots non-profit agent of change located in East St. Louis. Our footprint is that typical underserved area; Cahokia, Washington Park, Sauget, East St. Louis, Centreville, all of those areas. There are -- so we provide job training, apprenticeships and we work through issues of violence and ways to reduce recidivism. We're also State of Illinois

[^18]Pillars of Excellence for our work to work through structural racism and find equitable solutions. So, with that, I wanted to kind of round off what everyone is saying. So I don't want to be repetitive, but, you know, dark-skinned, African-American, Latino, poor people should no longer bear the burden of these dangerous pollutants that are inequitably distributed in our communities and depending on the type of exposure such contaminates can cause cancer and harm most human organs, human organs, and kill or sicken the wildlife.

As it has already been stated, coal ash is the second largest source of industrial waste in the country. I'm calling on both the Illinois environmental officials and the EPA for allowing Sauget, East St. Louis and surrounding communities which are predominantly dark-skinned Americans to become a dumping ground for toxics without giving residents information about the hazards.

The catchment areas leave those nearby subject to leaks, discharges and spills. And I need you to consider why our communities

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must catch even more chemicals to our detriment. We continue to perpetuate the myth of an angry black people who need to be kept on the outskirts of society while you continue to perpetually inject poisonous risk factors. Specifically, there are many studies that show the effects of chemicals on residents living in or near ground zero. We're talking about the same ones that are historically underserved, underrepresented, but always seem to receive the heavy hand of the sanctioning agent.

The chronic truancy, the tardiness, joblessness, layoffs due to illness, maladaptive behaviors, they all stem from this poison that is being allowed and strategically placed in our community yet we continue to deal with inequities in the police departments, school, employment opportunities and normal race relations which stem from these prejudices and stigmas that are caused from the historic poisoning of these underrepresented people of color communities.
In this time that we're dealing
with COVID and the death of George Floyd and so many others, I have to ask myself when I go to the

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park and $I$ read the signs saying that you're going to fill up on fisheries, why are you filling the lakes with fresh fish? I cannot help but consider that it is just to ensure that we ingest the coal ash and God knows what else. It is disrespectful to even have to discuss what you so carefully exclude from your own backyard. We are in a time of COVID with food shortages. There are kids/students who need to fish right now, but we're still discussing what we have been studying and what we already know. There is families that have to be self-sufficient and begin to garden.

I'm going to bring up one more point and I'll let you go. That is that environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, nation, origin or income. So I wonder if we're all meaningfully involved than why haven't we all come up with a solution? It would seem that the sanctioning agencies are too caught up in political agendas and moneymaking schemes and life seems to lose its value.

Please do something on behalf of
the people living now and our children who must grow up under the same stigma that we are currently under due to the historic poisoning and the fallout that is indicative of what we see playing out daily in the news. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. Circling back to Pete Plescia if you are on the line. As a reminder, you can unmute yourself by pressing the microphone button or pressing Star 6 if you're on the telephone.

MR. PLESCIA: Yes. Can you hear me?
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Please limit yourself to a three-minute comment. Pease proceed.

MR. PLESCIA: Sure. I just had brief comments, but to introduce myself I'm a veterinary. I live in Galesburg, Illinois, so Western Illinois, and we have lived here about ten years. I've been involved with Sierra Club on and off for the last ten years and I thought this was a good opportunity to kind of check out what is going on.
I did some reading on coal ash

[^19]and essentially just want to put in my, you know, two cents that we try and basically look at making restrictions in a way that will make, you know, the coal industry realize that it is time to move on to more sustainable resources. Personally, we've switched over our business to using a hundred percent solar and we've had very good experience and good support from the community and the state and even the federal government in terms of resources that way and so, you know, just I think it's time to put the restrictions on in a heavy enough way that it makes that form of producing energy, you know, become very obvious that it is going towards obsolete and only step forward towards more sustainable production of energy.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. We'll move on to the 7:00 to 7:15 segment. Mr. Steven Sondheim, are you on the line? Steven Sondheim. Moving on. Just as a reminder, if you are on video, unmute yourself by pressing the microphone button at the bottom of the screen. If you're on the telephone, by pressing Star 6. Stuart Levy.

[^20]MR. LEVY: Hi. I hope this is
working.
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes.
Mr. Levy.
MR. LEVY: Okay. Good. Great. Thanks. I'm Stuart Levy from Champaign. I'm a volunteer with the Prairie Group of the Sierra Club.

> I'd like to bring some concerns
about the proposed coal ash rules and how they might affect our group's area and a place that matters to me, that is the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River, and over it, as you've been hearing, hangs a huge pile of coal ash from Dynegy Vistra. So I visited that river and I kayaked on it. I hope some of you have seen it, too. It's a very pretty place, but along the bank you can see exposed the edge of the coal ash pile and leachate seeping steadily into the waterway and presumably more material is seeping into the groundwater where we can't see it. The gabions that aim to slow the river's erosion of the ash pile can't hold up indefinitely. They aren't holding up.

In the long-term, the meandering
river is going to win and some spring flood might undermine that ash pile and bring some huge volume of ash sweeping down river as has happened elsewhere. So when that time comes, who could afford to clean up the river? The ash needs to be moved away from the river. There is even contiguous land outside of the floodplain even owned by the same company where it could be moved to.

With the passage of the SB 9
coal ash bill, who Senate and House champions Senator Scott Bennett and Representative Carol Ammons are from this area, the great hope was that it would be a framework for protecting the environment over the long-term from coal ash piles like this one including determining whether, when and how they must be moved.

There was bi-partisan support for the idea that polluters should be on the hook for the cost of preventing pollution, not for disasters to be left for cleanup at public expense. So that's the law that these regulations are supposed to implement.
At an Illinois EPA input session
last year, I expressed the hope that those proposed rules would not rely on U.S. EPA standards for regulating coal ash as the federal government had been working to undermine those, as they since continued to do, but there are some aspects where the proposed rules do depend on not even U.S. EPA final rules, but U.S. EPA proposals which are turning out to be even worse. So some of them look relevant here. There is the notion of temporary accumulation of a CCR storage pile, but there's no limit set on either how long a temporary pile might remain nor how large it might be.

There is supposed to be a documented timeline for removal, but not only how long the timeline might be or how complete the coal ash removal might be or even the removal needs to actually happen. The proposed rules also incorporate another U.S. EPA proposal that allows ash pile owners unlimited time to clean up groundwater with any number of extensions that could be permitted and doesn't even explicitly require that the groundwater protection standards must even be reached.

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MS. MURJI: That's Murji.
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Please proceed.

MS. MURJI: Hi, everyone. My name is Tessine and I'm an organizer for the Ready for 100 Campaign with the Illinois Sierra Club. I'm speaking for coal ash protections because I
believe that we must protect people from harmful pollutants that will affect our children and grandchildren. Effects of coal ash are not a short-term problem. They are a long-term problem with dire human consequences.

As you know, research has shown
that coal ash can cause nervous system impacts like developmental delays and cognitive deficits. It can also cause cancer, heart damage, lung disease among other severe health problems. It is important that we implement strict regulations similar to those in Michigan in order for our communities to breathe clean air and drink clean water. These are basic human rights, not luxuries that should be available to all Illinoians. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment.

Moving on to Toni Louise Oplt.
As a reminder, you can press --
MS. OPLT: Yes. Can you hear me?
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes, please proceed.

MS. OPLT: Hi. Thank you so much
for, again, holding a public comment portion of the hearing process. My name is Toni Oplt and I live in Edwardsville, Illinois. I am a member of the Metro East Green Alliance and the Sierra Club.

The Metro East region sits along
the Mississippi River and is home to diverse residents. There are community run members of river towns like Alton and East Alton. There is abundant wildlife including the bald eagle and myriad species of fish and, in times without a pandemic, there are boaters and skiers and fledgling tourism businesses.

This area is also home to the shuttered Wood River Power Station just -- that sits just feet along the Mississippi River and feet from the Wood River Creek. It was abandoned in 2016 by Dynegy Vistra and it is now owned by Commercial Liability Partners. It is a company that has spent (audio cut out) and nearly zero protective oversight. At least four deep unlined ponds sit on this property and are designated per the company's current closure plan to be capped in place.

> Citizens here do not deny that
they are really concerned about this situation. We also don't deny climate change and we don't deny the frequent flooding that comes with it. Last year flooding left river towns like Alton and Grafton shut down for months because their streets were impassable due to high water.

So I'm wondering given that the Wood River Power Station sits on a floodplain in a time of escalating climate crisis why the IEPA decided not to include floodplains on its list of locations that are deemed restricted from capping in place?

It isn't only the rainwater from above that threatens to unleash the pollution housed at the Wood River Power Station. It is also the inevitable rising water table from below that will allow the ash in the unlined ponds to become saturated and the water in those ponds already proven to contain unacceptable levels of major toxins will flow back out as the water recedes polluting fragile ecosystems and wetland habitat poisoning the drinking water of already devastated communities all for corporate savings and gain.

To deny this outcome is
negligent and unacceptable. The rules for safe clean up and storage of coal ash should not -should not only make clear that the coal ash under no circumstance should be wet, but that the protection from CCR contamination is not possible on a floodplain simply by capping ponds in place.

A cap does nothing to protect us from that raising groundwater and then the subsequent leaching. Designating floodplains as a restrictive location is particularly important to our area near the Wood River Power Station, but as you've heard all along rivers and streams and creeks in Illinois there are coal ash impoundments that are, likewise, flood prone and will also leach due to the groundwater problem. You know, it's rained for three days here and I have seen flood warnings run across my TV every day.

So ash ponds on floodplains pose a great threat to my community and communities across Illinois. They should not be allowed to be capped in place, those ponds, and this danger should not be denied. I do thank you for this opportunity.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you so much for your comment. Moving on to Tony Gray. Tony Gray, G-R-A-Y. Just as a reminder, you can unmute yourself if you are on video by pressing the microphone button. If you are on a telephone, by pressing Star 6. Please limit yourself to three minutes of comments. Okay. I'll circle back to Mr. Gray. Tony Heath.

MR. HEATH: Hi. Am I unmuted?
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes, please proceed.

MR. HEATH: Hi. I'm Tony Heath and I'm a professional civil engineer in the State of Illinois and I've volunteered in the past with eco-justice collaborative on their campaign to protect the Middle Fork from coal ash impoundment on the Vermilion power station.

The first thing I'd like to say is that I support the items that were outlined in public comments submitted by the Environmental Law and Policy Center as well as others on June 15th, 2020 .

However, since my time is short, I wanted to limit my comments to two primary areas

[^21]of concern with the rules proposed by the Illinois EPA.

Firstly, that the rules do not adequately protect Illinois ground and surface waters and, secondly, they don't provide adequate opportunities of meaningful public participation. So, first of all, as is noted in the proposed rules, coal ash contact with groundwater allows for the leaching of chemicals hazardous to human and animal health.

However, the rules as written currently allow for coal ash to be stored in impoundments which place them within the local groundwater table. This issue is exacerbated by the fact that the current rules do not prohibit the storage of coal ash within designated floodplains. Variable groundwater levels within the floodplain (audio cut out) both leaching chemicals (audio cut out) periodic soaking and then draw down of this water. And in addition to allowing coal ash to be stored in the floodplain, it creates additional hazard as rivers seek to reclaim their natural waters.

Therefore, I recommend that the
rules be revised to prohibit placement of coal ash within five feet of a local groundwater table and also as previously stated to add floodplains to the list of restricted restrictions.

Secondly, as you know, we're all very aware at this point the handling of coal ash, coal combustion residuals is incredibly complex. It is so complex that 14 days is a laughingly inadequate amount of time to ensure that the public is able to become aware of and review application materials prior to the pre-application public meeting. In order to ensure that these rules provide meaningful public participation, I recommend that the rules require the full permit application, including all supporting documents and materials made available as part of the public notice and that the public be given a full 30-day period to review these materials before the public hearing. That's all. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comments. Next, Cass O'Keefe. If you are on the line, Cass O'Keefe.

MS. O'KEEFE: I'm having trouble
unmuting.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Okay. No problem. You're unmuted.

MS. O'KEEFE: I'm unmuted?
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes, we can
hear you.
MS. O'KEEFE: Okay. Thank you for allowing me to speak this evening. My name is Cass O'Keefe and I am a resident of Waukegan and I am a member of Clean Power Lake County. I live about a mile from the NRG coal fire power plant which is located in Waukegan on Lake Michigan.

Lake Michigan is a precious resource that those of us who live here treasure and it worries me that coal ash from old coal ash sites on the NRG property is polluting nearby groundwater. I ask that you include these dump sites in the rules for coal ash clean up. I also would ask you to prioritize environmental justice communities like Waukegan. Waukegan's pollution problems have been ignored for far too long. Please put our coal ash clean up at the top of the list of communities to be taken care of.

Also, please monitor the clean up. As an asthma sufferer, I know what it feels
like when poor air quality makes it difficult to breathe. Protect our community and workers from the spilling of coal ash dust during clean up. Make sure there is meaningful oversight by independent organizations who know what they are doing and serve the interests of the people nearby. And, finally, please keep us informed. Make sure there is clear communication with the community about what is being decided and being done. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. Julie Luner.

MS. LUNER: Okay.
HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Yes, we can
hear you.
MS. LUNER: Good evening. My name
is Julie Luner. I am a member of the Heart of Illinois Sierra Club. I live in Peoria, Illinois not too far from the Dynegy ED Edwards coal plant and I'm speaking today to express my concern that the rules for coal ash sites are written to be strong. Simply capping the coal ash dumps is not sufficient to protect our waterways and specifically the rules should ensure the
following.
One, permanently protect water from coal ash pollution; two, cover not only coal ash impoundments, but also coal ash fill and old coal ash dumps; three, it should ensure worker and community protection; four, environmental justice communities should be prioritized; five, the public has access to and an opportunity to review all supporting documents to ensure that communities have a voice that are protected and owners and operators are complying with required safeguards; and, finally, the final rule must not be weakened by including unapproved federal rollbacks. Thank you for your time and good evening.

HEARING OFFICER HORTON: Thank you very much for your comment. I am going to circle back to the individuals who were not on the line for the 7:00 to 7:15 time period and then I'll begin at the beginning for the individuals who were not available starting at 5:00. So hopefully we'll get everybody.

Mr. Steven Sondheim, are you on the line? Steven Sondheim. Okay. Mr. Tony Gray.

$$
\begin{gathered}
\text { L.A. Court Reporters, L.L.C. } \\
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\end{gathered}
$$

Tony Gray. Okay. I'm circling back to the beginning and as a reminder, if you are on mute participating by video, please press the microphone button on the screen to unmute yourself. If you are calling in by telephone, please press Star 6 to unmute yourself.

And we'll begin -- please limit
yourself to a three-minute comment. Amy
Kitzmiller. Amy Kitzmiller. April Sedall. April
Sedall. Arlene McFadden. Arlene McFadden.
Barbara Beckler. Barbara Beckler. Christa
Haberkorn. Christa Haberkorn. David Blood.
David Blood. Ella Simms. Ella Simms. George Crouse. George Crouse. Gloria Heggy. Gloria Heggy. James Fallaw. James Fallaw. Jen Halbert. Jen Halbert. Jenica Hopkins. Jenica Hopkins. Jessica Blasingame. Jessica Blasingame. Joey Gage. Joey Gage. Kathryn Dittemore. Kathryn Dittemore. Laura Hansen. Laura Hansen. Laurie Willets. Laurie Willets. Linda Englund. Linda Englund. Linda Scott. Linda Scott. Lisa Velez. Lisa Velez. Nancy Long. Nancy Long.

And that concludes our public comment section for tonight. Thank you very, very
much for all the members of the public who provided their comments today. The Board greatly appreciates it and, again, as a reminder the Board gives equal weight to both written and public comment. That concludes our public comment section for tonight and we will begin tomorrow at 8:00 a.m. Thank you very much.
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BEFORE THE ILLINOIS POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

I, Steven Brickey, Certified Shorthand Reporter, do hereby certify that I reported in shorthand the proceedings had at the trial aforesaid, and that the foregoing is a true, complete and correct transcript of the proceedings of said trial as appears from my stenographic notes so taken and transcribed under my personal direction.

Witness my official signature in and for Cook County, Illinois, on this $\qquad$ day of
$\qquad$

STEVEN BRICKEY, CSR, RMR 8 West Monroe Street Suite 2007 Chicago, Illinois 60603
Phone: (312) 419-9292
CSR No. 084-004675

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