

From: [Sabrina Hardenbergh](#)
To: [Brown, Don](#)
Subject: [External] Public comment on Case # AS 2021-006, SIPC Marion Coal Plant, coal ash ponds
Date: Monday, June 30, 2025 7:32:23 PM

Don Brown and Illinois Pollution Control Board (IPCB):

I am submitting my public comment on Case # AS 2021-006, concerning whether to permit an exemption for the eight coal ash ponds at SIPC Marion Coal Plant at Lake of Egypt in southern Illinois. I attended the public hearing on June 10th in Marion, where I heard many friends state their concerns about the toxic pollution from the coal ash ponds. It also seems that SIPC wants to drag out their timeline for cleaning anything up.

I live nearby in southern Illinois, with my electric power as a coop member from Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association (that coordinates with SIPC's contribution to the regional grid), and I get my water from Buncombe Public Water District. I live about 15 miles west of SIPC, where we sometimes may have some of their air pollution (like the particulate matter indicated on the EPA's EJMapper website), and close enough that friends and I may visit for recreation at Lake of Egypt with its marina, fishing and water sports, or visit friends who live on the shore of Lake of Egypt. Sherry Sullivan spoke to you at the hearing, and I have been to her house several times on the Lake of Egypt shoreline. My immediate neighbor's parents live by Lake of Egypt, so their young toddler daughters go visit their grandparents often for family picnics and gatherings, where pollution in the SIPC area will impact their growing bodies and minds in ways that can be harmful in more ways than is bad enough in an adult, where people risk getting cancer, kidney, cardiovascular and neurological problems.

While SIPC sometimes denies it, there is significant coal ash in their eight coal ash ponds that are right along the roadway into Lake of Egypt, and their own reports on their disclosure page on their website indicates the toxins. The Illinois EPA has asked twice that SIPC not be given an exemption for their coal ash ponds since the IEPA acknowledges the ponds have toxins in them. The coal ash toxins flow into the groundwater around the coal ash ponds, which are right by Lake of Egypt, that you can see on the map. So the toxins go in the adjacent lake and groundwater that supplies people's wells in the region. People right around the Lake of Egypt get their drinking water from this coal ash polluted water. Plus, if it's a dry dusty windy day, toxic particulate matter can blow off the coal ash ponds and onto the nearby land, air, and water, making further vectors by which the pollution can impact people, their pets and wildlife.

SIPC's and other reports indicate the coal ash toxins at this site include [arsenic, boron, calcium, chloride, cobalt, lead, pH, sulfate, thallium, and TDS](#) in the IPBC [case documents](#). Reports on coal ash pollutants specifically in SIPC coal ash ponds can be read on the [SIPC website](#).

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[Environmental – SIPC – Southern Illinois Power Cooperative](#)

Over my adult life, I have worked in health research, health law, healthcare quality improvement, eldercare, and I've volunteered for environmental health causes. I well

understand that these many coal ash toxins are harmful to human and wildlife health. I've been the newsletter editor for a decade-plus with our local Sierra Club and other local environmental groups' many actions and attention to the ongoing coal mine and coal power plant issues in our region, with added compounding vectors from oil/natural gas, plastics, PFAS, and other pollution issues in the region (c.f., selected articles in past newsletters below). Cumulatively, we have many pollution and health hazards here. I know I/we cited the PSR coal ash information re health hazards in our older actions and information for the public ([coal-ash.pdf](#) , [Coal and Coal Ash | Physicians for Social Responsibility](#)). Arsenic is among other toxins, which I have examined in my other research on arsenic in volcanic geology and agricultural settings where it's a big problem for people's health (c.f., [UNESCO | USQ UNESCO Chair Arsenic](#)).

[Newsletters | Sierra Club](#) (list/weblinks for all newsletters since 2013)

[ShawneeTrailsMar2014Web.pdf](#) (action alerts for Peabody's Rocky Branch strip mine, coal ash regs at coal power plants)

[ShawneeTrailsJune2014forWeb.pdf](#) (Rocky Branch strip mine update)

[ShawneeTrailsDec2018forWeb.pdf](#) (Pond Creek Mine pipeline)

[ShawneeTrailsMar2019forWeb.pdf](#) (local coal plant and plastics factory particulate matter pollution)

In Illinois, our state Constitution specifies we have a right to health and safety.
[Illinois Constitution - Preamble](#)

Please do not permit SIPC to have an exemption for its eight coal ash ponds. They must clean up this toxic pollution to ensure better health for southern Illinoisans.

Respectfully,

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