

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Sangamo Room, 1021 North Grand E.  
Springfield, Illinois April 16, 2018, 4-8 PM  
Hearing Officer: Marie Tipsord Case Number R2018-20  
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Thank you for conducting this meeting on the lowering of the Multi-Pollutant air emission standards. Poor air quality threatens the health of all of us and negatively impacts economic development in IL.

I worry that IEPA has effectively abdicated its responsibility to the health and safety of IL citizens. IEPA negotiated with Dynegy behind closed doors to write a revision that was favorable to Dynegy. This action by IEPA has skirted its true mission by failing to adequately protect the health, welfare, property, and quality of life for residents.

It is a tragedy that IEPA is more concerned about the profits of a Texas company than the clean air that is breathed by Illinois residents.

This is disappointing to me. However, I have been disappointed many times before by how regulatory agencies, namely IEPA and IDNR/OMM, do not represent or honor the interests of citizens and communities. These agencies accommodate the coal mining-coal fired utility complex so as to approve what is most profitable for them with little regard to the consequences in terms of increased damage to health, environment, and community. The toxicity of coal, coal slurry, coal emissions, coal ash, and coal tar was never addressed by the very agencies that are supposed to protect citizens.

My recollections are based on the construction of Deer Run Mine in Hillsboro, IL, the opening of Shay 1 Mine in Carlinville, IL. and the Coffeen Power Plant south of my home.

IEPA along with IDNR approved underground coal slurry injection at the Shay 1 Mine. This was approved in IL at the same time that there was a moratorium in WV due to extensive ground water contamination.

The coal slurry injection has continued at this mine site where there was already groundwater contamination from high hazard coal slurry impoundments for over a decade. Coal ash is even imported from other areas and other states and added to these offending impoundments. Coal ash even threatens the Middle Fork of the Vermillion River at the closed Vermillion Plant owned by Dynegy.

Deer Run Mine was granted a lifetime air permit with no requirements that fugitive dust be confined to the mine site. When the mine was active, coal dust permeated the community, and the hospital next door needed to change the air filters more frequently. There were 2 petitions, signed by 100's of local residents, directed to the IEPA asking for air monitors so residents could be aware of the quality of air that they were breathing.

The requests for air monitors were denied and the community still does not have any air monitors. In fact there are no air monitors in Montgomery County. The lack of air monitoring suggests to me that air quality is not a concern of IEPA and residents need to demand that air standards not be lowered.

Deer Run Mine has been inactive since 2015 due to an underground fire that has produced unsafe levels of carbon monoxide. The mine has been sealed but the fire continues with a second hot spot found recently. The community is left with an ongoing safety problem with no apparent regulatory support.

The NPDES water permits for Deer Run Mine do not cover the most harmful chemicals in the discharges from the mine, or the quantities, or the total accumulations in the receiving streams. Contamination of surface water surrounding Deer Run Mine was documented when testing the conductivity of the waters during active mining. A high conductivity indicates impaired ecology and viability of coalfield streams.

Lastly, the permanent placement of 2 high hazard coal slurry impoundments that upon failure would inundate the community causing loss of life and extensive property damage is right out of the coal baron's WV 's playbook. Risk assessment is not done for the safety of the community in WV or IL.

When I realized that IEPA and IDNR were not representing me, or my neighbors, or Montgomery County, I was disgusted and determined to tell the disastrous events that I have experience the last decade. I am asking the Pollution Control Board to help Illinois citizens.

Illinois must not go any more backwards; do not lower our quality of air, please do not approve lower air standards.

Thank you,

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