

Proposed Rollback of Federal Coal Ash Rule

Coal ash is the toxic waste left after coal is burned at power plants. It contains arsenic, chromium, lead, mercury, radium, and other hazardous chemicals that present serious risks to human health and the environment.

More than 110 million tons of coal ash are generated every year in the United States. For years, coal ash has been dumped in unlined pits from which toxic chemicals leak into groundwater and pollute drinking water wells and our lakes and rivers.

In 2015, the Environmental Protection Agency, under President Obama, adopted the first-ever federal protections against the dangers posed by coal ash. That rule requires closure of ash dumps in dangerous locations (including within five feet of groundwater), regular inspection of coal ash ponds, monitoring of groundwater near coal ash sites, closure of leaking ponds, cleanup when contamination is found, safe closure of dumps, and public posting of monitoring and inspection results.

Now, under EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, the Agency has proposed to weaken or eliminate those important safeguards in response to requests from an industry that wants to maximize its profits.

Of particular concern, Pruitt's EPA has proposed to:

- Allow operators of coal ash ponds and landfills to write their own standards
- Make cleanup of contamination discretionary (i.e., let polluters do nothing)
- Eliminate the requirement that leaking ponds install liners or close
- Give polluters extra time to close ponds and landfills located in unsafe areas and eliminate the strict location prohibitions entirely
- Allow political appointees, instead of professional engineers, to decide if a cleanup is adequate or even required.

These changes put the health and well-being of communities across the country at risk. Join thousands who have voiced their support for federal protections from coal ash.

Public Hearing -- [CLICK HERE](#) to register to speak

When: Tuesday, April 24 (9AM–12PM; 1–4PM; 5–8PM)

Where: DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, 300 S Army Navy Drive, Arlington, VA 22202

Written Comments -- [CLICK HERE](#) to submit to EPA by Monday, April 30