



SOUTH DAKOTA COAL ASH DISPOSAL, CONTAMINATION AND STATE REGULATORY GAPS

Summary of Coal Ash Generating Facilities in SD

FACILITY	OPERATOR	ONSITE DISPOSAL ⁱ	COUNTY
Big Stone	Otter Tail Power	landfill	Grant
Ben French ⁱⁱ	Black Hills Corporation	none	Pennington

landfill= one or more landfills onsite

Amount of coal ash generated per year: South Dakota electric utilities generate 97,300 tons of coal ash annually. South Dakota ranks 44th nationally for coal ash generation.ⁱⁱⁱ

Coal Ash Landfills in North Dakota

From 2008 to 2010, Big Stone Power Plant disposed of 182,000 tons of coal combustion waste in one or more onsite landfills.^{iv} From 1985 to 2005, the plant disposed of a total of 1,925,900 tons of coal combustion waste onsite.^v

Coal Ash Contamination in South Dakota

South Dakota's only facility with onsite ash disposal has a history of contamination. The Big Stone Plant has demonstrated damage to groundwater at 21 out of 25 downgradient monitoring wells. Groundwater—which supplies 119 wells within a 5-mile radius of the plant— has been measured at 13 times the federal drinking water standard (maximum contaminant level (MCL)) for arsenic, and up to 7 times the MCL for lead. Groundwater contamination has also dramatically exceeded standards for boron and sulfate.^{vi}

South Dakota Regulatory Gaps Leave Communities Unprotected:

South Dakota regulations lack critical safeguards for public safety. The state does not require that all coal ash landfills and ponds conduct groundwater monitoring, install composite liners, nor maintain financial assurance. Nor does the state prohibit the construction of coal ash ponds and landfills directly in the water table.

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ⁱ U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration, Form EIA-767, Annual Steam-Electric Plant Operation and Design Data. 1985-2005, available at <http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/electricity/page/eia767/>.

ⁱⁱ Sourcewatch, South Dakota and Coal,

http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=South_Dakota_and_coal#Coal_Ash_Waste_and_Water_Contamination (last visited May 17, 2012); U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration, Form EIA-767, Annual Steam-Electric Plant Operation and Design Data. 1985-2005, available at

<http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/electricity/page/eia767/>.

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration, Form EIA-767, Annual Steam-Electric Plant Operation and Design Data. 2005, available at <http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/electricity/page/eia767/>.

^{iv} U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration, Form EIA-923, Schedule 8. Part A. Annual Byproduct Disposition. 2008-2010, available at http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/electricity/page/eia906_920.html.

^v U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration, Form EIA-767, Annual Steam-Electric Plant Operation and Design Data. 1985-2005, available at <http://www.eia.gov/cneaf/electricity/page/eia767/>.

^{vi} Environmental Integrity Project, Earthjustice and Sierra Club. In Harm's Way: Lack of Federal Coal Ash Regulations Endangers Americans and Their Environment (Aug. 2010).