



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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State regulators responding to report of crack in earthen dam at Duke Energy facility

RALEIGH – The N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources is responding to a report from Duke Energy that a crack has formed in an earthen dam that’s part of a coal ash impoundment at the Cape Fear Steam Electric Station in Chatham County.

Duke Energy reported the crack to DENR officials at 4 p.m. and said that no water was flowing through the earthen dam, said Steve McEvoy, state dam safety engineer with the N.C. Division of Energy, Mineral and Land Resources. Staff members from the Division of Energy, Mineral and Land Resources are driving to the facility to determine the cause of the crack and to determine whether the crack is a threat to the integrity of the dam and what can be done to fix the crack.

“From our first reports from the utility and based upon photographs, the dam does not appear to be in imminent danger of failure,” McEvoy said. “The crack doesn’t look like it has progressed deeply into the downstream face of the dam.”

The dam is considered a high hazard dam because of the potential environmental damage if it were to fail. The dam is part of a coal ash impoundment, which was constructed in 1985 and is used to impound coal ash, which is waste generated when coal is turned into electricity.

An on-site canal that is on the west side of the dam eventually flows to the Cape Fear River.

No homes or roadways are near the dam, which sits on the Cape Fear Steam Station’s property in Moncure, N.C., about 760 feet from the on-site canal.

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