



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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DENR orders Duke Energy to halt discharges from second pipe under coal ash basin

RALEIGH – The N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources ordered Duke Energy late Tuesday afternoon to immediately halt any discharges of material from a leaking 36-inch stormwater pipe beneath the coal ash basin in Eden where another stormwater pipe failed and caused a spill of coal ash into the Dan River.

DENR staff issued the order to Duke Energy Tuesday afternoon after initial tests the state agency conducted indicated the presence of elevated levels of arsenic. The elevated levels of arsenic are one of the key indicators of the presence of coal ash. DENR identified the unauthorized discharge during its ongoing investigation of the coal ash spill at the Dan River power plant in Eden.

“Given what we’ve seen, we’re concerned that this second stormwater pipe on site may also be leaking water contaminated with coal ash pollutants into the Dan River,” said Tom Reeder, director of the N.C. Division of Water Resources. “As such, we are ordering Duke Energy to eliminate this unauthorized discharge immediately.”

DENR will evaluate this violation in connection with all pending enforcement actions related to the coal ash spill. Additional sampling will be done, in order to characterize the impacts of this discharge to water quality in the Dan River.

DENR staff remain concerned about the cumulative impacts of coal ash on the Dan River and its possible long-term effects on aquatic life.

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