
Dear Administrator Wheeler:

On behalf of the 165 undersigned state legislators, we urge you to abandon two recent Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) proposals that would weaken water pollution limits for coal plants and rollback critical human health and safety standards needed to protect communities from toxic coal ash. Instead EPA should commit to strengthening these safeguards, which were both finalized by your agency in 2015.

As representatives of residents in 35 states, we understand the vital need to protect our constituents from coal plants, which are responsible for dumping more arsenic, lead, mercury, selenium, and other heavy metals into our rivers and lakes than any other industry. These same plants store their toxic coal ash waste in unsafe dump sites next to rivers and near communities. Recent monitoring data found that 92 percent of U.S. coal plants are currently contaminating groundwater with toxic substances above federal health standards. Pollution from coal plants has also made it unsafe to eat fish from many rivers and lakes, tainted the places where people swim, and contaminated drinking water sources. In 2015 your agency took significant steps toward addressing this pollution by requiring coal plants to safely close and clean-up contaminated coal ash sites and by prohibiting the dumping of coal ash transport water and imposing stringent limits on toxic pollutants in scrubber sludge discharged to precious water resources. Yet now your agency is putting communities in our states at risk by proposing to rollback these commonsense requirements.

We are concerned that your proposal to rollback water pollution limits for coal plants would allow millions of gallons of toxic wastewater to be dumped into our waters daily, even though technology to eliminate this pollution is widely used and affordable. It would
also allow higher levels of arsenic and selenium in scrubber sludge to be discharged to lakes, rivers and streams, and give plants up to five years to come into compliance with these weak limits. Finally, the proposal would exempt certain coal plants from even these lax standards.

We are also concerned that your proposal to weaken coal ash safeguards would extend the operating life of unstable and dangerously-sited coal ash dumps that are contaminating groundwater. This proposal would also allow leaking ash dumps to continue to accept toxic waste. The 2015 coal ash safeguards, in contrast, required site operators to begin closing unlined ash dumps contaminating groundwater and dumps in unsafe locations nine months ago, or by April 2019.

The EPA’s proposal to weaken existing coal ash safeguards and to rollback water pollution limits for coal plants are big concessions to the power plant industry at the expense of the health of communities in our states. We urge your agency to withdraw these dangerous proposals, and instead commit to adequately protecting human health and the environment from coal plant water pollution and toxic coal ash waste by strengthening the underlying 2015 rules.

Thank you for consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

Representative Pricey Harrison  
*North Carolina*

Senator Lela Alston  
*Arizona*

Representative Isela Blanc  
*Arizona*

Representative Andres Cano  
*Arizona*

Representative Charlene Fernandez  
*Arizona*

Representative Rosanna Gabaldon  
*Arizona*

Senator Juan Mendez  
*Arizona*

Senator Tony Navarrete  
*Arizona*

Senator Martin Quezada  
*Arizona*

Representative Jeni Arndt  
*Colorado*

Senator Mike Foote  
*Colorado*

Representative Chris Hansen  
*Colorado*

Representative Cathy Kipp  
*Colorado*

Senator Brittany Pettersen  
*Colorado*
Representative Peter Schmidt  
New Hampshire

Representative Deborah Armstrong  
New Mexico

Senator Liz Stefanics  
New Mexico

Senator Bill Tallman  
New Mexico

Representative Liz Thomson  
New Mexico

Senator John Brooks  
New York

Assemblymember William Colton  
New York

Assemblymember Steve Englebright  
New York

Assemblymember Patricia Fahy  
New York

Assemblymember Richard Gottfried  
New York

Senator Liz Krueger  
New York

Assemblymember Barbara Lifton  
New York

Assemblymember Amy Paulin  
New York

Assemblymember Jeffrey Dinowitz  
New York

Representative John Ager  
North Carolina

Representative John Autry  
North Carolina

Representative Cynthia Ball  
North Carolina

Representative Mary Belk  
North Carolina

Representative Deb Butler  
North Carolina

Representative Becky Carney  
North Carolina

Representative Christy Clark  
North Carolina

Representative Ashton Clemmons  
North Carolina

Representative Allison Dahle  
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North Carolina

Representative Terence Everitt  
North Carolina

Representative Susan Fisher  
North Carolina

Senator Valerie Foushee  
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Representative John Fraley  
North Carolina

Senator Michael Garrett  
North Carolina

Representative Rosa Gill  
North Carolina

Representative Wesley Harris  
North Carolina

Representative Zack Hawkins  
North Carolina
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<th>Name</th>
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Representative Jennifer Dailey-Provost  
Utah

Senator Jani Iwamoto  
Utah

Representative Diana Gonzalez  
Vermont

Representative Trevor Squirrell  
Vermont

Senator Scott Surovell  
Virginia

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Senator Sam Hunt  
Washington

Senator Janet Bewley  
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Representative Sondy Pope  
Wisconsin

Representative Melissa Sargent  
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Wisconsin

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Representative Jill Billings  
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Wisconsin

Representative Katrina Shankland  
Wisconsin