

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

March 18, 2011

OFFICE OF
SOLID WASTE AND
EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Mr. Daniel Siegfried, Managing Attorney
Alliant Energy Corporate Services
Legal Department
200 First Street SE
PO Box 351
Cedar Rapids, IA 52406-0351

Dear Mr. Siegfried,

Re: Significant Structural Stability Concerns at the Burlington Generating Station

On Wednesday, March 16, 2011, U.S. EPA initiated a conference call with Alliant Energy (Dan Siegfried, Buddy Hastings, and Bill Slinks) and EPA's engineering contractor, Dewberry and Davis (Jerome Strauss and Joseph Klein) to discuss structural stability concerns for coal ash impoundments at the Alliant Energy Burlington Generating Station. EPA appreciates the cooperation Alliant Energy has been providing us.

After reviewing Alliant's engineering contractor's report (Aether), it was apparent to EPA that the Economizer Pond did not meet a minimum factor of safety under projected seismic loadings. Dewberry and Davis have substantiated this opinion.

However, a greater concern to EPA was that Aether reported that the entire impoundment complex (Ash Seal Pond, Bottom Ash Pond, Economizer Ash Pond, Ash Pond 1, and Ash Pond 2,) was underlain with sands and silts which may become fluidized under anticipated seismic loadings. If the impoundments at the site were to fail under projected seismic loadings, there may be progressive failures of impoundments at the site. Dewberry and Davis have also substantiated this opinion.

EPA must now proceed under an "abundance of caution" approach. EPA is therefore requesting that Alliant: 1) review the Aether report and any other related engineering studies and

2) submit a written response by close of business March 23, 2011 which either agrees with our concerns and presents the actions Alliant intends to undertake immediately, in the short term and long term, or if there is a disagreement with our concerns, the technical basis for adopting that position.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Stephen Hoffman
Senior Environmental Scientist