



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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Residents near coal ash ponds to receive results of drinking water well tests, health evaluations

RALEIGH – State officials will soon mail residents living near Duke Energy’s coal ash facilities water test results and health risk evaluations based on sampling of the residents’ drinking water supply wells.

Under the Coal Ash Management Act of 2014, the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources required Duke Energy to contract with private laboratories to collect samples at water supply wells within 1,000 feet of each facility’s boundary. To date, laboratories have collected samples from 145 private drinking water supply wells and five public drinking water systems near the company’s 32 coal ash impoundments.

Many constituents that were tested may be naturally occurring or unrelated to coal ash ponds. DENR scientists are investigating the source of the constituents, including determining the naturally occurring levels in the area groundwater for each site.

If state officials determine, through these site assessments, that groundwater standards in a well have been exceeded and that a coal ash pond is the source, the law requires that Duke Energy provide the residence with an alternative water supply.

State officials are analyzing the results of water samples collected from other wells near Duke Energy’s coal ash facilities and will make those results available to affected residents and the public as soon as they have been completed. In this round of sampling, wells within 1,000 feet of the facilities were tested. Using the data from the first round, DENR will determine which additional wells need to be tested near each facility to evaluate the extent of any coal ash contamination.

While DENR evaluates the results for regulatory purposes, the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services uses the same data to evaluate health risks. Health risk evaluations will be mailed to residents along with potential well treatment options to remove or reduce contaminants from well water if needed.

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