

October 28, 2005

Flood Waters Recede Temporarily; Re-survey of River Begins

High flows in the Delaware River – which have prevented PPL from re-surveying the river to determine whether ash was moved by flood waters – dropped enough by Oct. 20 to enable divers to look at the shallower area near the shore where the portable dam had been.

That area in front of the PPL Boat Launch had the highest ash deposition following the spill in late August.

In the initial inspection, the divers found portions of the dam breached, with the majority, including its metal framework, still in place. However, it had sustained a large amount of damage. The divers also found a minimal amount of ash on the inside edge of the dam.

For safety reasons, the portable dam is being removed. Once the river flow allows it, divers will use hand-held vacuum lines to clean up any remaining ash in the area of the dam.

Divers also will assess the river bottom from the boat launch area to Easton, and beyond as necessary. Once the survey is completed, plans will be developed to remove any ash that remains, and the plans will be submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection for approval. The work will be done as river flows



The portable dam was visible again as the river level dropped.

permit. Work can be done safely and productively when the flow is no more than 5,000 cubic feet per second. On Oct. 24, the flow was 20,400 cfs at the Belvidere gage.

Meanwhile, we continue to work on the other portion of the diver-vacuumping operation – construction of two large diver platforms and filtration plants on both sides of the river.

From the Cleanup Director



Lower river flow levels for a short time this past week made it possible to get divers into the river to assess the effect of the heavy rain. Since the divers must be able to see clearly and remain in one position long enough to operate hand-held equipment, the work began first in the area where we had installed the portable dam.

When the river flow recedes to a safe level, the divers will look at the two areas within about a mile downriver from the

PPL Boat Launch where there had been large deposits of ash. They also will survey the river bottom as far downriver as the

confluence with the Lehigh River – and they will look beyond that if necessary.

Once the divers determine the location of the ash and we have the necessary regulatory approval for our revised plan to clean it up, we'll begin the diver-vacuumping operation immediately.

On Oct. 19, we were notified by the federal Environmental Protection Agency's Region III that it will be conducting a preliminary assessment of the Martins Creek ash spill. We welcome EPA's involvement and will cooperate fully with the assessment. We have responded to a request for information, and we understand that EPA representatives will visit soon to observe the cleanup.



Bob Barkanic

Residential Well Testing Results Mailed

Results of the more than 230 residential well tests done since the spill have been sent to property owners. All of the results showed levels of arsenic, selenium and mercury – the constituents of concern in fly ash – below the state and federal drinking water standards. In the case of arsenic, Pennsylvania results also were below the more restrictive standard of 10 parts per billion, and New Jersey results were below the new standard of 5 ppb. Both new standards will go into effect in January.

The wells were tested for substances commonly found in fly ash. Elevated levels of some of those substances – calcium, iron, lead and copper, for example – can result from the natural hardness of the groundwater in the area or may indicate corrosion in the pipes in the home. The wells were not tested for bacterial contamination since that does not result from fly ash.

Well owners in New Jersey can send the results of their tests to the Warren County Health Department for



independent evaluation. In Pennsylvania, the state Department of Health will do the independent assessment if homeowners request it.

If you have questions about your well test results or would like to have your well tested, call 1-866-364-2800.

Martins Creek Environmental Advisory Committee Holds First Meeting

The new Martins Creek Environmental Advisory Committee met for the first time Oct. 19.

Representatives of the Northampton County Conservation District, the Martins-Jacoby Watershed Association, Clean Water Action, the Lower Mount Bethel Township Environmental Advisory Committee and the Sierra Club Lehigh Valley Group attended the meeting. Invited to join the committee, but unable to send a representative to the initial meeting, was the Harmony Township Environmental Committee. The Delaware Riverkeeper declined an invitation to join the committee.

The meeting included a presentation by Bob Barkanic, Martins Creek cleanup director. Members expressed their concerns about the ash spill and its effects on the Delaware River and offered suggestions regarding the cleanup plans and possible additional representatives for the committee. The group plans to meet every two weeks initially, and then monthly.

Ash Basin #4 Upgrades Completed

Upgrades to Martins Creek Ash Basin #4 have been completed. The upgrades include installation of new steel-reinforced concrete stoplogs, construction of a steel wall on the basin side of the discharge structure and installation of two valves on the pipeline between the discharge structure and the river. A manhole on the discharge pipe at the base of the ash basin along Depues Ferry Road also was replaced.

With this part of the work on the basin complete, PPL is working with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to demonstrate that the ash basin is safe to again use for disposal of ash from the coal-fired generating units at the plant.



When PPL receives DEP approval to return the ash basin to service, the company plans to restart the coal-fired units.

From the desk of Bob Barkanic, cleanup director.
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