

**Submission
No 7**

**INQUIRY INTO COSTS FOR REMEDIATION OF SITES
CONTAINING COAL ASH REPOSITORIES**

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Date Received: 11 February 2020

Submission

Wednesday, February 12, 2020 11/02/2020

From

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To

Parliament of New South Wales

Legislative Council

Public Works Committee

Inquiry into the costs for remediation of sites containing coal ash repositories

I am a private citizen and I have lived in the Lake Macquarie area for 60 years and use the Lake for recreational purposes. I have always taken action to ensure that I have not impacted on the lake environment. I have always owned trailerable boats to lessen impact of antifouling paint on moored vessels in the lake. I avoid wash to prevent erosion. I handle fuels and wastes carefully to avoid pollution.

I am very alarmed to find that pollutants have entered the lake from the Eraring and Vales Point ash dams and accumulated to dangerous levels. As well as the identified contamination of lake shell fish there appears to be contamination of lake birds. I no longer eat seafood from the lake.

I feel angry that power station operators, governments and protection authorities have allowed the ash dam nightmare to evolve as it has. That wet ash dams have been allowed beside the biggest tidal lake in Australia is at least surprising to me. That they should still exist with

- **no lining,**
- **known ground water contamination,**
- **no financial bond,**
- **no ash management plan and**
- **no adequate closure or rehabilitation plan**

is astounding.

Given what we now know about the problems with wet ash dams and that the Myuna Bay Sport and Recreation facility has already been closed due to the identified risk, the notion that the dams could be extended is preposterous. Any idea of leaving the ash in place is totally socially irresponsible. The American experience tells us enough. I would hope that appropriate action now can avoid a coal ash disaster like the Tennessee Valley Authority Power Station, Harriman disaster, with its' unthinkable impact and billion dollar clean up.

I believe strongly that our local ash dams should be **closed and rehabilitated as soon as possible. As there is already ground water contamination I believe that the best solution is to remove the ash from the site to be properly contained in a suitably lined dam with appropriate capping.** The American experience shows that contamination can be significantly reduced by this means.

I further strongly believe that the **cost of this rehabilitation should be met by the companies that currently profit from the operation of the power station and not by the tax payer. Action now to move the ash will be cheaper than any clean-up after a dam breach, and will avoid the environmental damage that would be caused.**