

**Submission
No 24**

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

Name: Mr Graeme Batterbury

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Government Inquiries are an essential first step in understanding the health and environmental impacts of this enormous toxic waste issue and the solutions required to fix it.

The toxins in coal ash have been linked to asthma, heart disease, cancer, respiratory diseases and stroke. Communities that live near coal-fired power stations are most at risk.

The NSW government is legally responsible for much of the rehabilitation of the coal ash dams.

When power stations were privatised in NSW, the NSW Government retained liability for the rehabilitation of coal ash dams (to the degree that the state was responsible for all coal ash produced whilst it was the operator and owner of the power stations). This includes the coal ash dams at Vales Point and Eraring power stations on the NSW Central Coast.

So, while the power stations are privately operated (and obtaining significant financial benefit from operating a utility we all rely on), the NSW public is responsible for much of the rehabilitation of the coal ash dams. This is patently inequitable!

Power stations must be required to prepare comprehensive rehabilitation and closure plans.

Furthermore, the NSW Government must make information about coal ash dams transparent and available.

The public should have access to information about coal ash repositories transparent and available, including all groundwater monitoring data (current and historical), all existing management plans, details of Sale and Purchase Agreements and baseline contamination studies, rehabilitation plans, pollution incidents, fines and other enforcement actions taken by regulators, monitoring data, hydrogeological assessment, predictions for future contamination, and predictions for future land-use planning.

Warm regards and Thanks