

Where's the Best Place To Put Coal Ash?

by Ron Sobczak

You may have read about the proposed coal ash landfill in Pickens. Coal ash is the generic term referring to several very distinct materials produced when we combust coal to produce electricity. We need places to safely store the huge amounts of coal ash generated from coal power plants. The proposed landfill in Pickens was originally developed as a Class 2 landfill to store construction and demolition (C&D) waste and other nonhazardous waste. Coal ash which contains toxic heavy metals such as lead and arsenic needs to be stored in a Class 3 landfill following Coal Ash Rules, with protection for groundwater, limitations on dust, leachate management, a synthetic liner and a public website posting information about the site.

MRR Pickens, owner of the Pickens landfill site, sought permission to store coal ash in its landfill which was just designed for C&D. MRR Pickens brought a \$25 million lawsuit against the Pickens County Planning Commission who revoked approval when they learned what MRR Pickens actually planned to do with the site. Attorney Gary Poliakoff, member and longtime supporter of the Bartram Group, is representing the Pickens County Planning Commission.

Meanwhile the SC Sierra Club is working with the SC House and Senate to pass a bill that will require that coal ash be stored in a Class 3 landfill with all the necessary protections. Protecting the environment requires diligence and commitment. Fortunately, in SC we have environmental heroes like Gary Poliakoff. But we also need you to contact your legislator to get this environmental protection into law. 🌱



Deadline for April bulletin is Friday, March 18

Send your submissions to wbartramnews@gmail.com

Sierra in Action

Thank you to Gary Poliakoff



This past month, we presented a certificate of appreciation to Gary Poliakoff for long time support of the Bartram group.

(photo above, on left, with Ron Sobczak)

The Green Spot



Sharing the Green

Go Easy on the Chemicals

- The use of pesticides and fertilizers on lawns and gardens is responsible for nearly 10 percent of the common water pollution attributable to consumers, and it causes about 3 percent of toxic water pollution. We need to remember that pesticides—whether they are herbicides, insecticides, or fungicides—are expressly designed to kill living things. When used improperly (and sometimes even when used as intended), they can endanger people and harm living things other than their intended victims.
- You should always keep in mind that pesticides and fertilizers can be dangerous and avoid applying them in unnecessarily high quantities or in a cavalier reckless manner. You should consider whether there is a nonchemical method for dealing with a lawn or garden problem. If you conclude that you need to use a pesticide, choose the one that poses the least risk.
- It is also worth thinking about what sort of landscaping you want and need. The first, but perhaps psychologically hardest, change you can make is a change in mindset. Rather than aspire to have a perfect, uniform lawn, you can instead accept one that has a few uneven spots, weeds, and differences in coloration. In addition, you can make sure to use those grass seed mixtures that will require the fewest pesticide applications in your particular climate.
- Over time you can redesign your yard so that it is low-impact. Limit the amount of grass, use other ground covers, plant more native shrubs and trees.