

Legal Battle Over Ash Ponds In IL

Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — An Illinois coal plant operator says it's eager to address an environmental group's claims that the company's ash ponds pollute groundwater.

Midwest Generation spokesman Douglas McFarland was responding to news that a federal bankruptcy judge lifted a stay on a lawsuit filed by the Environmental Law & Policy Center.

An automatic stay was imposed when Midwest Generation declared bankruptcy late last year. But U.S. Bankruptcy Court Judge Jacqueline Cox said late Wednesday that the suit can continue before the bankruptcy proceedings are over.

The ELPC wants the Illinois Pollution Control Board to determine that Midwest Generation is responsible for cleaning up any groundwater contamination caused by coal ash ponds at plants in Joliet, Pekin and Romeoville.

McFarland says the ponds have permits, are operated safely, and groundwater is being monitored.

Source URL (retrieved on 01/30/2015 - 9:36am):

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