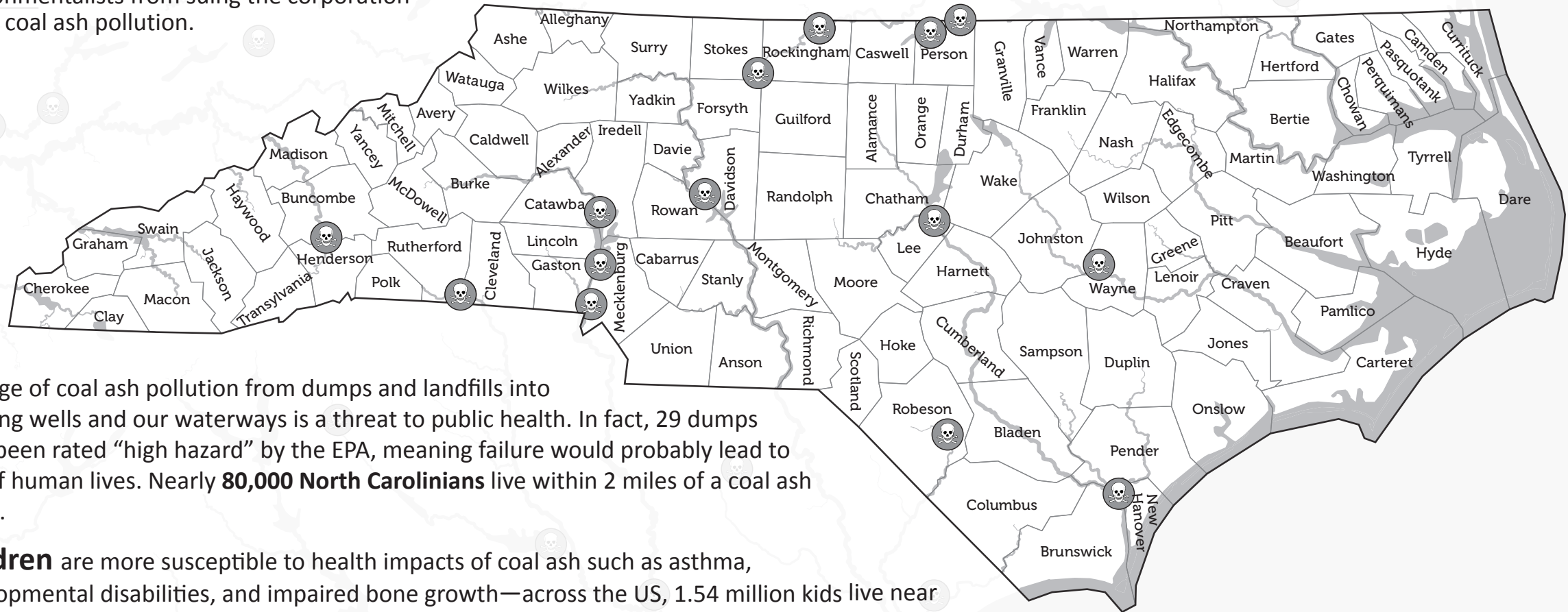


Coal Ash Dumps in NC

On February 2, 2014 one of **Duke Energy's coal ash dumps** burst, emptying **39,000 tons of toxic sludge into the Dan River**, coating the riverbed for 70 miles downstream. The public was not notified for over 24 hours. For the preceding year, the administration of former Governor McCrory had blocked NC environmentalists from suing the corporation for its coal ash pollution.

This preventable disaster caused huge suffering, and it could have happened anywhere in our state. NC has at least 50 reported toxic coal ash dumps, containing at least 16 billion gallons of coal combustion waste. That's enough to cover 38,662 football fields one foot deep.



Leakage of coal ash pollution from dumps and landfills into drinking wells and our waterways is a threat to public health. In fact, 29 dumps have been rated “high hazard” by the EPA, meaning failure would probably lead to loss of human lives. Nearly **80,000 North Carolinians** live within 2 miles of a coal ash dump.

Children are more susceptible to health impacts of coal ash such as asthma, developmental disabilities, and impaired bone growth—across the US, 1.54 million kids live near coal ash sites. 19,046 children in NC live near coal ash sites.

People of color make up more than 20,000 of those located near coal ash dumps in NC.

People living in poverty: Across the United States, 70% of coal ash dumps are located where the household income is below the national median, the same areas with **less access to healthcare, education and voting rights.**

Data: Southern Alliance for Clean Energy / secoalash.org
Map: Tim Stallmann

Where do we go from here?

In January 2020, Duke Energy reached a settlement with the Southern Environmental Law Center and the NC Department of Environmental Quality in which Duke agreed to clean up approximately 80 million tons of coal ash at six sites. The ash will be moved into on-site lined landfills.

But the cleanup could take 15 years and cost \$8-9 billion. Who will pay that bill? Duke wants its customers to pay and regulators went along with that over the objections of multiple parties. The NC Attorney General and the Sierra Club are arguing in the NC Supreme Court that Duke's shareholders should pay instead.

Duke Energy, take notice. **North Carolina ratepayers will not pay for your mess without a fight.** We need clean energy and environmental justice, not corruption.

Duke Energy and its shareholders must pay for the cleanup and site remediation at all of Duke Energy's coal ash dumps (often called "ponds"). For many years, Duke Energy executives and shareholders have profited from what Duke Energy considered a cheap solution to a serious toxic waste problem, so the burden for cleanup now rightfully belongs to them.

Living near a coal ash dump can be extremely hazardous for your health. Coal ash contains toxic pollutants causing cancer and neurological, cardiovascular, and reproductive damage. We reject responses that disproportionately harm communities of color, low-income communities, or others that polluters have historically perceived as lacking the ability to resist.

Given the many hazards and costs of coal, Duke Energy must begin to rapidly phase out all of its coal-fired power plants so that no more of this toxic waste needs to be stored or dumped in North Carolina.

NC WARN

www.ncwarn.org

rev. March 2020

Mercury* ●

Mercury poses particular risk to children, infants and fetuses. Impacts include nervous system damage and developmental defects like reduced IQ and mental retardation.

● Lead*

Exposure to lead can result in brain swelling, kidney disease, cardiovascular problems, nervous system damage, and even death. It is accepted that there is no safe level of lead exposure, particularly for children.

Chromium ●

Ingestion of chromium can cause stomach and intestinal ulcers, anemia, and stomach cancer. Frequent inhalation can cause asthma, wheezing, and lung cancer.

● Arsenic*

Ingestion of arsenic can lead to nervous system damage, cardiovascular issues, and urinary tract cancers. Inhalation and absorption through the skin can result in lung cancer and skin cancer, respectively.

Selenium ●

Selenium is used in many bodily functions, but deficiencies or excesses can be bad for one's health. Excess intake of selenium can result in a host of neurological effects, including impaired vision and paralysis, and even death.

● Boron

Inhalation of boron can lead over the short-term to eye, nose, and throat irritation. Ingestion of large amounts, however, can result in damage to the testes, intestines, liver, kidneys, and brain, and eventually lead to death.

Other Toxicants

Antimony

Eye, skin irritation
Stomach pain, ulcers
Lung disease

Cadmium

Emphysema
Kidney disease
Hypertension
Lung cancer

Molybdenum

In animals:
Slowed growth
Low birth weight
Infertility

Thallium

Nervous system damage
Lung, heart, liver,
kidney problems

*Children are particularly at risk

graphic: Physicians for Social Responsibility and Earth Justice