Colstrip’s Bright Future with Cleanup

Good News: We Can Keep Jobs in Colstrip!

In a recent study, we found that regions using robust cleanup strategies involving the removal of coal ash through excavation have retained workforce levels up to 50-90%.

Ash pond closure creates many good-paying jobs. These jobs should go to the existing workforce in Colstrip.

Responsible cleanup is key to Colstrip’s bright future

- Sites that have removed coal ash using excavation have retained workforce levels up to 90%.
- Sites that use minimal cleanup strategies like cap-in-place require a much smaller workforce and are exposed to ongoing groundwater contamination.

Colstrip has a choice—responsible cleanup with many jobs or minimal cleanup with few jobs.
Why Are the Coal Ash Ponds a Problem?

Colstrip ash ponds are leaking 367 gallons per minute into the groundwater.

Radium, chromium, arsenic, and selenium—heavy metals and pollutants found in coal ash pond water—are highly toxic to humans, cattle, and wildlife.

Even though Castle Rock Lake supplies the town of Colstrip with clean drinking water, the groundwater pollution is still a big problem for county residents and future property values.

Groundwater Contamination Plume

This map, from Colstrip plant owners, shows the smallest of Colstrip’s growing contamination plumes. The colored sections represent varying levels of groundwater contamination.

The amount of water Colstrip plant owners must pump out of the ground to keep the plume from spreading further into town.

In 2008, plant owners had to pay Colstrip residents millions of dollars to settle a lawsuit over groundwater pollution.

Even though Castle Rock Lake supplies the town of Colstrip with clean drinking water, the groundwater pollution is still a big problem for county residents and future property values.


### HOW MANY JOBS?

Cleanup that involves excavation and removes contamination requires many different workers with many different skill sets. Here are just SOME of the jobs created by these projects:

- Heavy equipment operator
- Mechanic
- Electrician
- Excavator operator
- Fence erector
- General laborer
- Truck driver
- Site superintendent
- Environmental engineer
- Mechanical engineer
- Civil Engineer
- Computer-aided development and design (CADD) specialist
- Septic systems operator
- Surveyor
- Well driller
- Pump installer
- Demolition specialist
- Security guard
- Construction crews
- Septic system installer
- Groundwater sampling technician
- Water treatment plant operator
- Environmental Health and Safety officer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant Name/Location</th>
<th>Cleanup Approach</th>
<th>Pond Size</th>
<th>Cleanup Jobs</th>
<th>Power Plant Operation Jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Riverbend Station</td>
<td>Excavation</td>
<td>69 acres</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(North Carolina)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asheville Plant</td>
<td>Excavation</td>
<td>76 acres</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(North Carolina)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belews Creek</td>
<td>Cap-in-place</td>
<td>283 acres</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(North Carolina)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colstrip Station</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>~800 acres</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Montana)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research shows that excavation tends to create more jobs than a minimal “cap-in-place” cleanup approach. North Carolina plants that recently excavated their coal ash ponds required more workers (relative to their size) than plants that used cap-in-place.

For instance, the Asheville pond excavation and cleanup required a workforce 95% the size of its operational plant workforce.
Colstrip and Rosebud County deserve cleanup done right!

**PLANT OWNERS MUST PAY FOR CLEANUP**

Colstrip plant owners are required by law to clean up the leaking ash ponds. It’s up to the community and the state of Montana to demand the cleanup that’s best for Colstrip’s future. We need a cleanup strategy that:

- **Stops pollution permanently.** Excavation and active water treatment are responsible, long-term solutions to stopping pollution AND creating jobs. Cap-and-abandon is **NOT** a solution!
- Employs local workers.
- Doesn’t push unnecessary costs onto Montana taxpayers.