



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lunch-and-learn on coal ash pollution set for March 1

VALDOSTA - In the wake of the ongoing water crisis in Flint, Michigan, local citizens and lawmakers in Georgia are turning their attention to coal ash, a toxic byproduct of coal-fired electricity. A community lunch-and-learn set for Wednesday, March 1, from 12:00-1:00 p.m. at the Academy of Excellence, will address coal ash issues in South Georgia and potential impacts to drinking water and local waterways.

Coal ash contains arsenic, mercury, lead and other heavy metals and is stored in unlined, uncapped ponds on utility company property near waterways. Utility and waste companies in Georgia and out-of-state are now working to move coal ash to permanent storage, including storage in existing municipal solid waste landfills. Concerned citizens, environmental groups and some elected officials warn that current policies on the transport and storage of coal ash do not provide adequate protection for rivers, lakes and the Floridan aquifer, south Georgia's drinking water source.

"Coal ash pollution can create a serious public health crisis, especially for the unborn and children," said Rev. Dcn. Leeann Culbreath of GIPL (Georgia Interfaith Power & Light), a faith-based statewide environmental group. "Citizens should get informed and involved now to prevent contamination of our precious water resources."

Currently, there are three bills in the Georgia legislature that address coal ash: House Bill (HB) 387 (to ensure testing and treating of water pumped from ash ponds into waterways), HB388 (to require municipal landfills to prepare a special management plan for coal ash) and Senate Bill (SB) 165 (to hold out-of-state companies liable for damages when they dump coal ash in Georgia).

Presenters include Rev. Dcn. Leeann Culbreath with GIPL, John S. Quarterman with WWALS Watershed Coalition and No Ash at All, a citizens' group in Jesup. GIPL, a Georgia Water Coalition partner, is sponsoring this event, which is free and open to the public. Please bring a lunch and beverage to enjoy. The Academy of Excellence is located at 1618 N. Lee St., Valdosta (across from Serenity Church). For more information, contact leeann@gipl.org.

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