

DD

My name is Lisa Venezia. I moved to Labadie 15yrs ago. I've been an owner of the Labadie Market and Deli, the president, and the business's manager for the past 13 1/2yrs. I have had the privilege of meeting, serving, and befriending so many Labadie area residents, countless AmerenUE employees, and hundreds of outside contractors who have worked at the power plant. I have much respect for most.

I am here tonight to share with you my experience with the AmerenUE plant manager in early 2010, [REDACTED], shortly after the controversial landfill project was presented to the community. [REDACTED] orchestrated a boycott of my Market and Deli in January 2010 that lasted several months. His comments at the time of reconciliation in later spring still concern me today.

Here are those that I remember best:

1. I couldn't believe you were letting a LEO member be interviewed inside your store.
2. I felt betrayed and angry when I thought you were supporting their objections.
3. We don't want public scrutiny.
4. The general public can't understand what we have to do.
5. Considering all of the business we've given you over the years, I really thought we'd have your support.

Are these the arguments used with public officials?

i.e. 'Because of the taxes we pay and the service we provide, we expect your support no matter what.'

LEO had held their first public meeting regarding the proposed new landfill in October 2009. Ameren had held their second public meeting on the same a month later in November 2009. I attended both. I had not had an initial negative knee jerk reaction to their plan. I gathered information and insight from as many Ameren employees and LEO members as possible. As you will hear when I now read excerpts from two letters submitted to David Fox and other Ameren officials during the time of their boycott, I took tremendous offense to their efforts to silence discussion.

Letters removed at Ms. Venezia's Request LV

Intervenor Exhibit No. 308
Date 3-31-2014 Reporter Stewart
File No. EA-2012-0281

ms. Venezia Exhibit No. DD
Date 7-10-13 Reporter SB
File No. EA-2012-0281

Here's what I know in a nutshell:

1. The first storage pond dug into raw earth decades ago holds fish and vegetation even today because the waste byproducts of burning coal in past decades were safer than today because the majority of the heavy metals and other toxins escaped through the stacks.
2. The newer, currently used surface retention ponds with liners appear like a denuded moonscape because after electrostatic precipitators were installed to remove some of the particulate pollution matter from the emissions the air became cleaner, but the byproduct ash became more toxin laden.
3. More efficient and advanced electrostatic precipitator units are being installed right now -as we speak here tonight- and in the not too distant future, federally mandated scrubber systems removing even more particulates from the emissions will eventually be installed as well.
5. These upgrades will be great for our improved air quality, but terrible for the ever increasing toxicity of our ash.

I say "our" because this is a publicly held utility, we "all" use the electricity generated, and you all are "our" Public Safety Commission members hired to oversee safety of these operations and the use of and misuse of these byproducts.

Which leads me to my final point and concern:::

We learned at the prior PSC hearing in Union that upper AmerenUE officials had been aware for YEARS of two ash storage safety violation leaks flowing from the current ash ponds. (If memory serves, one seeped at 5gal/min into the river and another gushed at 30gal/min on site – above ground and visible.)

Our Ameren counsel representative admitted and proudly confirmed that those seepages have just recently been remedied, i.e. "fixed, sealed, closed, stopped"

Great News.

But why did it take them so long to address these leaks?

I understand the magnitude of the challenge we are facing with the ever increasing toxicity of the byproduct ash.

Given this admitted history of avoidance of taking immediate corrective measures when faced with this past ash storage safety breach, I have had to come to the conclusion that a floodplain, floodway, earthquake susceptible riverside location is not necessarily going to be the best location for increasing volumes of increasingly toxic material.

Probably only very convenient – but we should all want better than just convenient.

Please send the extremely skilled engineers and site planners and designers back to the drawing table. It is ultimately acceptable to say NO - sometimes to AmerenUE - and yet still hold their people in your highest regard.

I know. I've done it.

Thank You.