

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -- 2/6/2014

City Manager Joe King has issued the following statement regarding the Duke Energy coal ash spill into the Dan River.

We take very seriously our responsibility to consistently deliver clean drinking water and maintain the public's confidence that we are doing so. Coming off the recent water contamination episode in West Virginia, people are understandably concerned and suspicious about assurances that water is safe to drink if contrary physical evidence (grey cloudy river water in our case) is apparent.

We have been transparent regarding this situation from the beginning. The following is a timeline of the events as they have taken place:

Approximately 5:30 p.m. last Sunday evening, Duke Energy called our Fire Department headquarters to notify us that it had suffered an ash leak upstream at its shuttered Dan River Steam Station in Eden, N.C. Duke Energy further advised that it just had begun assessing the situation and did not know the severity. At the time, we were informed a Duke Energy employee had walked down to the river and visually saw ash on the bank, but did not believe that it had actually reached the river.

Immediately following the call from Duke Energy, Danville Emergency Management was briefed on the situation, and our Water Treatment plant operators were notified. Danville Emergency Management notified the Virginia Emergency Operations Center, our state hazardous materials representative, and the dispatch center in South Boston.

Water Treatment plant operators began monitoring the situation. At 11 p.m. Sunday, plant operators first saw ash enter our raw water intake. They removed the ash from the raw water using routine treatment procedures. No special treatment was required. If there had been a threat to the water supply, then we immediately would have informed the public.

At approximately 8:00 a.m. this Monday, Duke Energy advised us that it had a full investigative team on site at its steam station and knew that ash was in the river, but did not know how much product had been spilled. At 3:45 p.m., we participated in a conference call with Duke Energy officials and emergency management officials from both North Carolina and Virginia. At the end of the call, Duke Energy announced it planned to issue a news release. In conjunction with Duke Energy's news release, we issued a public statement to

inform and reassure citizens that we were managing the situation and were confident that all treated water entering the distribution system met public health standards.

Out of an abundance of caution, additional testing was undertaken by Duke Energy and Danville Utilities. On Tuesday, the first test results of treated water samples became available and confirmed that the water leaving the city's treatment facility meets public health standards. We immediately issued a news release to report these results. The test results came from two finished water samples collected by Duke Energy at the city's two reservoirs. The Virginia Department of Health's Office of Drinking Water has seen and analyzed the results of test sampling from Duke Energy and concluded the results are "very acceptable." Furthermore, John Aulbach, director of the Virginia Department of Health's Office of Drinking Water, has issued the following statement to the media. "Danville Utilities has done a great job taking care of this." I wholeheartedly agree.

The water samples collected by Danville Utilities were sent to two private labs in North Carolina. Late Wednesday afternoon, we received test results from one of the private labs. Due to the late hour of the day, and understanding the deadlines under which the media operate, our public information officer, Arnold Hendrix, thought it was best to inform the media that the results were available and a news release was planned. Subsequently, we canceled the planned news release after discovery that the lab was fully certified in North Carolina, but not certified in Virginia. Although we had no reason to doubt the results, we did not want that fact to discredit the test results (which were favorable).

Today, we continue to await the test results from the Virginia-certified private lab. We will make those results available when we receive them. Duke Energy continues to collect water samples. All of its test results confirm that the water coming from our distribution system is safe to drink.

Duke Energy officials have been in constant communication with us since Monday morning. This afternoon, Duke Energy CEO Lynn Good telephoned Mayor Saunders to apologize for the incident and bring him up to date on progress being made in stopping the leak. Virginia Governor McAuliffe telephoned the Mayor and offered help from the Commonwealth if needed.

We will continue to monitor the situation and do our best to keep citizens informed.