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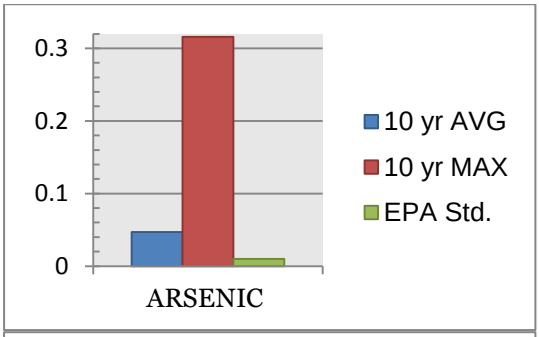
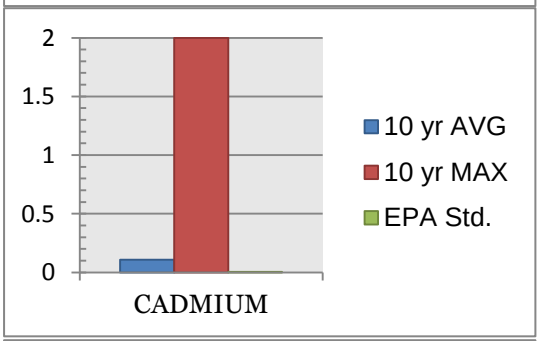
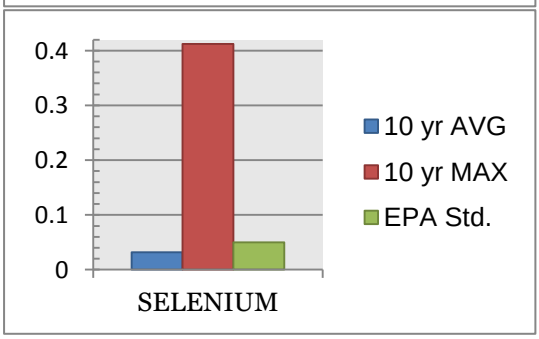
Xcel Energy's Valmont Plant: Boulder, CO

Landfill[1]	Liner	Leachate System	Active/Inactive	Materials
1). Valmont Ash Disposal Facility	No	No	Active	Fly ash, bottom ash, scrubber solids
2). Valmont Ash Disposal Facility	No	No	Inactive	N/A
Ash Pond[1]	**Liner**	**Materials**	**Wastewater Discharge Permit**	
East Ash Pond	No	Bottom Ash slurry	Individual wastewater permit to discharge into the Boulder Creek	
West Ash Pond				

The storage and disposal of coal ash from Xcel's Valmont plant is threatening groundwater and surface water for Boulder County residents and downstream. The graphs below show high levels of heavy metals like arsenic, cadmium, and selenium found in monitoring wells over the past 10 years. Both the 10 year average and the 10 year maximum are significantly higher than Environmental Protection Agency's drinking water standard and Colorado groundwater standards.







VALMONT QUICK FACTS

- *79,800 tons of coal ash were generated in 2011[2] at Valmont*
- *Active landfill is "lined" with clay and stone compacted layer*
- *Boulder Creek already polluted and EPA classifies it as "impaired" due to elevated levels of selenium[3]*
- *Arsenic, cadmium, and selenium have exceeded EPA's drinking water standards and Colorado's groundwater standard in one or more groundwater monitoring well[4]*
- *Arsenic and cadmium are cancer causing heavy metals[5]*
- *Selenium is harmful to long-term survival of fish[6]*

CONTAMINANT GRAPH KEY		
Contaminant	**Water quality standards**	**10 Year Avg.**
Arsenic	0.010mg/L	0.047mg/L
Cadmium	0.005mg/L	0.108mg/L
Selenium	0.05mg/L	0.032mg/L

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EPA Coal Plant Water Pollution Standards

Coal fired power plants are one of the largest polluters and are responsible for more than 50% of toxic pollution discharges in U.S. lakes, rivers and streams. More than 23,000 miles of rivers and streams are damaged by wastewater discharges from power plants from the billions of pounds of pollution generated annually from power plants.

These discharges include heavy metals like arsenic, mercury, lead, cadmium, selenium, chromium, nickel, zinc, and copper. **The Valmont plant is dumping wastewater from ash ponds into Boulder Creek, which EPA already considers polluted because of high levels of selenium.** Other Colorado power plants are also dumping into rivers that are already polluted, including South Platte River.

Current discharge guidelines and standards for power plants are over 30 years old and place no limits on toxic metals discharged into rivers, lakes and streams. **On April 19th, EPA submitted a proposed rule to update these discharge guidelines and standards. Clean Water Action supports the most protective option available.**

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1 Environmental Integrity Project. Data pursuant to Freedom of Information Act Request to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. "re: Questionnaire results for Steam Electric Power Generating Effluent Guidelines." June, 2012.
2 U.S. DOE's Energy Information Administration, Form EIA-923, Electric Power Data. 2011.
3 U.S. EPA. Enforcement and Compliance History Online. http://www.epa-echo.gov/cgi-bin/cso_wqr.cgi?npdesdfr=CO0001112
4 U.S. EPA. Drinking water contaminants. http://water.epa.gov/drink/contaminants/upload/mcl-2.pdf
5 ATSDR, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. ToxFAQ. http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index
6 U.S. EPA. Steam Electric Generation Point Source Category: Final Details Study Report. P. 6-7 to 6-18. October, 2008.

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