Brunner Island recognizes environmental and safety milestone

More than a million tons of ProAsh, a product produced by separating carbon from fly ash at PPL’s Brunner Island power plant, have been processed and sold for beneficial use over a seven-year period without a single lost-time accident.

Employees of Brunner Island and Separation Technologies, the company that processes and sells ProAsh, enjoyed a luncheon at the plant Sept. 4 to celebrate the milestone.

“We at PPL have long been committed to recycling byproducts of our processes for beneficial uses,” said Larry LaBuz, manager of coal combustion products for PPL. “We appreciate the dedication of Separation Technologies employees in helping us safely meet those commitments.”

Since 2006, Separation Technologies has been processing Brunner Island’s fly ash in its on-site processing facility, which removes the carbon from the fly ash so it can be used beneficially in concrete. Using it in ready-mix concrete reduces the amount of cement needed, which lowers the cost of the concrete and increases its strength over time. ProAsh manufactured from Brunner Island’s fly ash has been used in construction of the Freedom Tower in New York City.

“This achievement is an excellent example of how teamwork and a strong safety culture results in benefits for our business partners and our environment,” said Mark Deacon, operations manager for Separations Technologies. “We appreciate the support we’ve received from our employees and those of our host utility at PPL.”

PPL remains a supporter of policies that allow for beneficial use of coal ash.

Earlier this summer, those efforts received a boost when the U.S. House of Representatives, by a 265-155 margin, passed a bill that would establish enforceable standards for coal ash disposal and authorize states to establish and administer coal combustion residual permitting programs.

The legislation would prohibit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency from regulating coal combustion residuals as hazardous waste, an option the EPA has proposed and one that would severely limit, if not eliminate, beneficial use of coal ash.

Prospects for Senate approval of the Coal Combustion and Residuals Act remain uncertain.