

Mystery solved: Source of area's mysterious sound has been discovered

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WEST ALTON - The source of a mysterious sound heard throughout the Riverbend in the early hours of Sunday morning has been located.

After Monday's story detailing two Godfrey residents experiencing what they described to be the sound of rushing wind mixed with something mechanical, several people from across Alton, Godfrey, Elsah and even Grafton contacted Riverbender.com to say they too heard a strange sound around 2:30 a.m. last Sunday morning. After calls, research, deductive reasoning skills, "Sherlocking" it and a few Facebook comments, there is now an official explanation for the sound.

The power plant at Portage De Sioux is undergoing a major maintenance phase, a representative from Ameren Missouri said Tuesday morning. During that phase, the plant depressurized a major boiler, which released a tremendous amount of steam into the atmosphere.

"It was ultra-pure water," the representative said. "It's cleaner than anything you could even find from your tap."

That representative said these depressurization cycles occur from time to time, and are extremely loud, but said not to worry. Apparently, these venting processes are just a part of the normal cycle of how things go at the plant, and what was released into the atmosphere was high-pressure steam - or water vapor.

He added he is not sure why the sound could be heard across the entire area, but said it may have something to do with the acoustics of the bluffs and river valley. He said similar things occur at power plants across the country.

While one may deduce the pressure release was timed to be done when people would routinely be sleeping and would not normally notice the sound, the representative from Ameren Missouri said the timing was purely coincidental.

So, in conclusion, the sound was not secret aircraft, the horns of the apocalypse or even aliens, but the sound of that much high-pressured steam going into the atmosphere all at once may certainly sound like any of those things.