



Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future
The Waterfront Building
200 First Avenue, Suite 200
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-1557
P 412-456-2784
F 412-690-5105
info@pennfuture.org
www.pennfuture.org

Allegheny County Health Department
Public hearing re: McConway and Torley, LLC Synthetic Minor Source Operating Permit

4.14.2015

Testimony of Valessa Souter-Kline

Southwestern PA Outreach Coordinator at PennFuture
200 First Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222 Phone: (412) 456-2781

Good evening, my name is Valessa Souter-Kline and I am an outreach coordinator at PennFuture. I work in our downtown Pittsburgh office. PennFuture is a statewide public interest membership organization working to create a future where nature, communities and the economy thrive. On a personal note, I am a Pittsburgh resident and, when I moved here a couple years ago, I initially looked at an apartment in Lawrenceville. The air smelled strongly of industrial pollution the day I visited, however, and I ended up living elsewhere in the city – air pollution was one deterring factor.

I'm here today to state my support for the Allegheny County Health Department's efforts to control unhealthy air pollution from the McConway and Torley facility. Air pollution from industrial sources is a major problem in Pittsburgh – contributing about a third of the pollution that leaves our city with some of the worst air in the country. Pollution impacts us all but is especially dangerous to vulnerable populations, such as the elderly and children whose lungs are still developing. Furthermore, because children are more likely to spend time outdoors (in fact there are ballfield's and a playground just a short distance from the McConway and Torley plant) they risk increased exposure to pollution. The Health Department has proposed an improved synthetic minor source permit, based on sound science in alignment with Clean Air Act standards aimed at protecting the health of the community.

Steel foundry emissions contain fine particulate matter as well as unhealthy smog forming nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds and, of particular note, potentially hazardous levels of benzene emissions – benzene is a known carcinogen with other dangerous health effects. In addition to air toxics, smog pollution poses a significant threat to our health. Asthma and other respiratory, lung and heart diseases are all linked to smog pollution – and it is no coincidence that Allegheny County residents suffer from high rates of air pollution related illnesses. In fact, Pittsburgh is on the Asthma and Allergy Foundations list of worst places to live with asthma in large part because of air pollution challenges.

It is critical that we continue to work to reduce air pollution in Allegheny County – our communities count on it. I encourage the health department to stand by the reduced emissions that this permit would ensure and, furthermore, to increase monitoring of emissions from this facility – specifically benzene and manganese in order to better protect the residents in the area. Pittsburgh continues to grow and improve – and as it does, we can't ignore the air we breathe – we all deserve to open our windows and to breathe safe, clean air.

Thank you for your time and attention.

