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JOINT SENATE AND HOUSE DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Topic: Improving Air Quality
Clairton Municipal Building– Clairton, PA
February 7, 2019

AGENDA

- 12:00 p.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks
- 12:10 p.m. Panel from United States Steel Corporation:
- Chris Masciantonio, Director of Government Affairs & Public Policy
 - Mike Rhoades, Plant Manager, Clairton Coke Works
 - Tishie Woodwell, General Manager, Environmental Affairs
 - Kurt Barshick, General Manager, Mon Valley Works
 - Jim Futrell, Vice President of Market Research and Analysis, Allegheny Conference on Community Development
- 12:50 p.m. Panel from Allegheny County Health Department:
- Dr. Karen Hacker, Director
 - Jim Kelly, Deputy Director for Environmental Health
 - Michael Parker, Solicitor
 - Dr. LuAnn Brink, Chief Epidemiologist
- 1:30 p.m. Panel from Area Unions:
- Don Furko, President, United Steel Workers Local 1557
 - Jeff Nobers, Executive Director, Builders Guild of Western Pennsylvania
 - Ken Broadbent, Business Manager, Steamfitters Local Union 449
- 2:00 p.m. Panel of Health and Environmental Advocates:
- Dr. Deborah Gentile, Physician, Pediatric Alliance
 - Rachel Filippini, Executive Director, Group Against Smog & Pollution
 - Matt Mehalik, Executive Director, Breathe Project
 - Ashleigh Deemer, Western Pennsylvania Director, PennEnvironment
- 2:30 p.m. Closing Remarks

Pennsylvania Senate and House Democratic Policy Committees
Joint Public Hearing on Improving Air Quality

Thursday, February 7 at 12:00 p.m.
Clairton Municipal Building, Council Chambers,
Clairton, PA

On Behalf of United States Steel Corporation:

Chris Masciantonio, Director of Government Affairs & Public Policy
Mike Rhoads, Plant Manager, Clairton Coke Works
Tishie Woodwell, General Manager, Environmental Affairs
Kurt Barshick, General Manager, Mon Valley Works

February 7, 2019

The events on December 24, 2018 at the USS Clairton Plant.

In the early morning of December 24, 2018, the United States Steel Corporation experienced a significant fire at its Clairton Coke Plant. Thankfully, no employees or first responders were injured. The company notified the Allegheny County Health Department immediately on the morning of the fire, and has been in regular communication with the County Health Department as we continue to work to mitigate potential environmental impacts. The fire resulted in substantial structural damage and damage to our equipment that processes our coke oven gas. The attached photos provide a look at the extent of the damage, covering a large area of the plant, roughly the size of a football field. (Attached photos.)

The Clairton Plant operation is where the company converts metallurgical coal into coke, which is used in the making of liquid iron for the steelmaking process. Coke is an essential ingredient in iron and steel production. The coking process also produces coke oven gas as a by-product. In the areas damaged by the fire, clean coke oven gas is separated from other gases generated during the coking process and reused in our operations. Other byproducts were removed from the remaining gas, repurposed and sold.

Given the extent of the damage from the fire to the No. 2 control room building roof structure, employees were not able to enter the building until January 8 to gain direct access to the damaged equipment. At that point, once cleared for entry, an investigation team that included an independent fire investigator began their work. Based on the investigation, it appears that the fire originated from a mechanical failure in the C-521 vacuum machine area. We are using all available resources and working around the clock to make the necessary repairs to the impacted areas and equipment. Although we are expediting every possible repair required, many of these repairs are intricate and require additional specially fabricated parts that have long lead times to make. We have had full support from our local contractors and the Pittsburgh Building Trades with the repair work, including the steamfitters, boilermakers, iron workers and electricians. We are targeting on or before May 15, 2019 for a restart of the bulk of the affected operations.

Steps taken to mitigate the environmental impact of Clairton's operations while the fire-damaged equipment is being rebuilt, and additional steps taken by United States Steel to improve environmental performance.

After extinguishing the fire, company personnel moved quickly, and several steps were taken to immediately mitigate potential environmental impacts. We modified our operations by substituting natural gas in place of the coke oven gas. We relocated flaring of gas to higher elevations. We slowed the coke making process by extending coking times. We've worked with the Allegheny County Health Department to implement additional monitoring. And we launched an investigation to determine the cause of the fire and to determine how to safely rebuild the equipment in as efficient and safe a period as possible.

Environmental performance at the Mon Valley Works, including the Clairton plant, has seen significant improvements in recent years following considerable investment in our operations and processes. We've spent approximately \$100 million annually on environmental compliance for our Mon Valley Works facilities, most of that spending invested in the Clairton Coke Plant. At the Clairton Plant, the result has been a positive increasing trend since 2008 in the facility wide compliance rate...reaching 99% in 2018. Last fall, working closely with the County Health Department, we completed projects on time to reduce sulfur dioxide (SO₂) emissions in the Mon Valley as part of the State Implementation Plan (for the 1-hour SO₂ NAAQS of 75 ppb.) Following completion of those projects and before the Dec. 24 fire, the Liberty Borough monitor had no exceedances of the SO₂ standard. We improved our performance and the quality of our shared environment. While this unfortunate fire event has clearly dealt us a setback, we are no less committed in our resolve to be a steward of our environment and the good corporate neighbor that has contributed to the Mon Valley for generations.

The Mon Valley community is more than just the company's home; it's our company's birthplace and where our employees work and live.

The safety of our employees, our partnering contractors and our neighboring communities and residents of the Mon Valley is paramount to our efforts. We are devoting all necessary and available resources to ensure the matter is resolved as safely and as quickly as possible. It is our goal to not only quickly return the Clairton Plant to normal operations, but to continue to improve on our environmental performance. The company is committed to achieving this goal. We are committed to do our part, and we are confident we will have a bright future, protecting not only our shared environment, but also to continue to provide the good paying steel manufacturing jobs that have been the pride of the Pittsburgh region for generations. We recognize that Mon Valley residents have concerns regarding the Clairton Coke Plant and air quality and the company and all our employees are working hard to address those concerns.

Since the fire event, we have partnered with Highmark Health to provide Mon Valley residents with convenient access to free health screenings, should anyone have newly experienced respiratory issues. The Mon Valley community residents can find additional information, along with updates on our progress and repairs, links and resources and information about coke making on our dedicated website, www.Cclairton.uss.com.

U. S. Steel's presence in Allegheny County and the Pittsburgh region.

U. S. Steel has a long and important history in the Pittsburgh region. Andrew Carnegie opened his first steel mill, the Edgar Thomson plant, in the Mon Valley in 1875. The Pittsburgh region is fondly referred to – even today -- as the “Steel City”. While the steel industry has certainly changed since U. S. Steel was formed in 1901, Pittsburgh remains home to the company's headquarters and over 4,000 employees in Allegheny County. (See map of USS footprint in Allegheny County.)

At the beginning of the steelmaking process is the Mon Valley Works, Clairton Coke Plant. The Clairton Plant converts metallurgical coal into coke which is used in the making of liquid iron for the steelmaking process. The Clairton Plant operates 10 coke oven batteries that produce 4.3 million tons of coke per year. The Clairton Plant provides most of the coke needed for U. S. Steel's facilities to produce iron and steel. Without that coke from Clairton, U. S. Steel facilities could not operate the plants at Edgar Thomson (ET), the Irvin Plant and other locations that provide thousands of good paying and family sustaining jobs, healthcare benefits and pensions to our employees, retirees and their families, and support of the tax base to community's home to our operations.

The Edgar Thomson Plant in Braddock, Pa., is where basic steel production occurs. Iron ore from the company's Minnesota iron mines, coke from the Clairton Plant, and other raw materials are combined in the ET blast furnaces to produce liquid iron, which is then refined to create steel. Steel slabs from the ET facility are sent by rail to the nearby Irvin Plant in West Mifflin, Pa., where they are rolled into many different sheet products that serve customers in the appliance, automotive, metal building and home construction industries. The Mon Valley Works has an annual raw steel production capability of 2.9 million net tons. All of that steel is mined, melted and made in America.

In addition to coke, iron and steel production locations, the company's Research and Technology Center, located in Munhall Pa., is committed to developing cutting-edge products, creating innovative technical solutions and providing world-class support to the company's integrated steelmaking operations worldwide. The state-of-the-art facility is LEED certified. In addition, the company's Union Railroad operates on 128 miles of mainline and yard track in Allegheny County. The railroad's primary customers are the three plants of the Mon Valley Works. The Union Railroad maintains interchanges with the Bessemer and Lake Erie Railroad, CSXT, Norfolk Southern, Wheeling and Lake Erie Railway Company and Buffalo and Pittsburgh Railroad. And finally, the company's headquarters are in the U. S. Steel Tower in downtown Pittsburgh, an iconic landmark building made of COR-TEN® steel and built by the company in the 1970's.

The economic impact of U. S. Steel to the Pittsburgh region stretches far beyond the 4,000 good-paying jobs and includes the skilled professionals the company depends upon among the Building Trade Unions. In 2018, the company spent over \$3 billion on services and materials with over 1,000 suppliers and vendors in Pennsylvania. Our 3,000 Mon Valley Works employees earn \$3 million in wages and benefits annually. U. S. Steel is committed to supporting quality of life in the communities where we operate, including our home in the Pittsburgh region, where our families and neighbors contribute to the strength of our economy and our security as a Nation.



Allegheny River

Ohio River

Monongahela River

USS CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS

RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY CENTER

USS

Rankin
North Braddock
Braddock

USS

EDGAR THOMSON PLANT

Duquesne
West Mifflin

McKeesport

IRVIN PLANT

USS

CLAIRTON PLANT

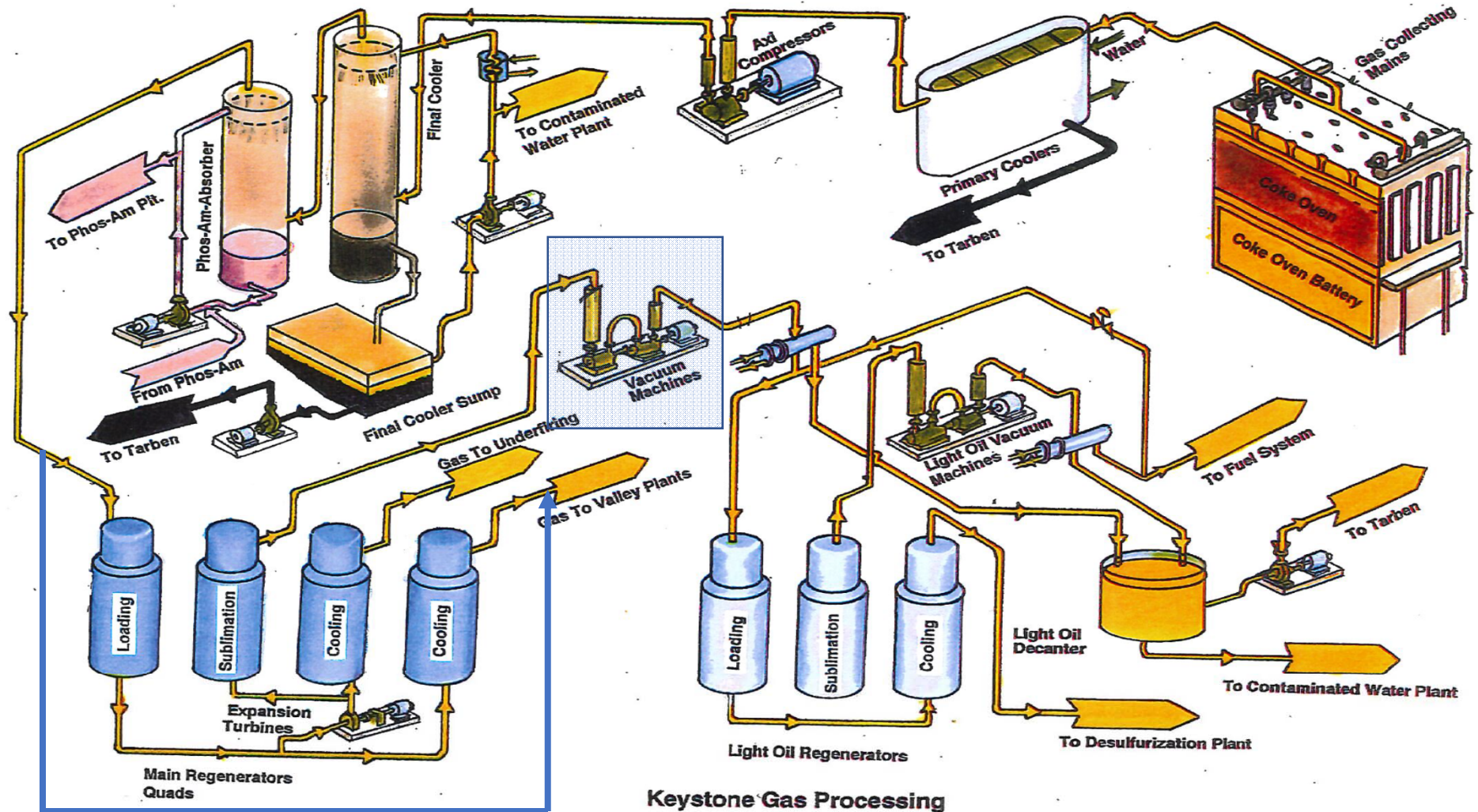
USS

Youghiogheny River

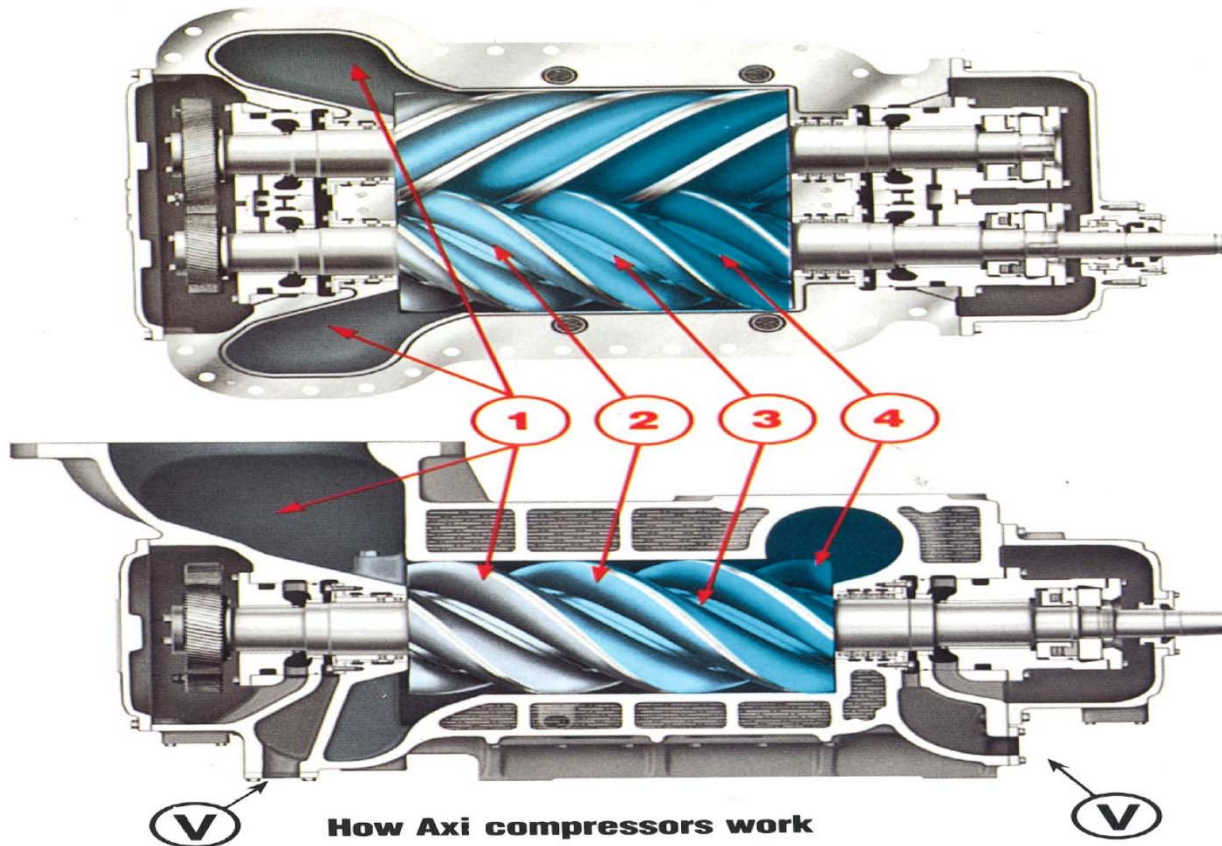
USS U.S. Steel Facilities

Rivers

Municipalities



Bypass to DR



How Axi compressors work

- 1** Gas enters the intake ports and flows into a pocket created between the rotors and the wall of the casing.
- 2** The pocket—now full of gas—rotates away from the intake and is ready to join its mating pocket.
- 3** Then, as the lobes and grooves roll into each other, the mating pockets merge and begin to shorten. Thus, the gas trapped inside is compressed as it is forced—axially—towards the discharge end.
- 4** As it continues its journey the gas is further compressed until it is pushed through the discharge ports.

Figure IV-1



United States Steel Corporation





United States Steel Corporation





United States Steel Corporation





United States Steel Corporation





United States Steel Corporation





United States Steel Corporation



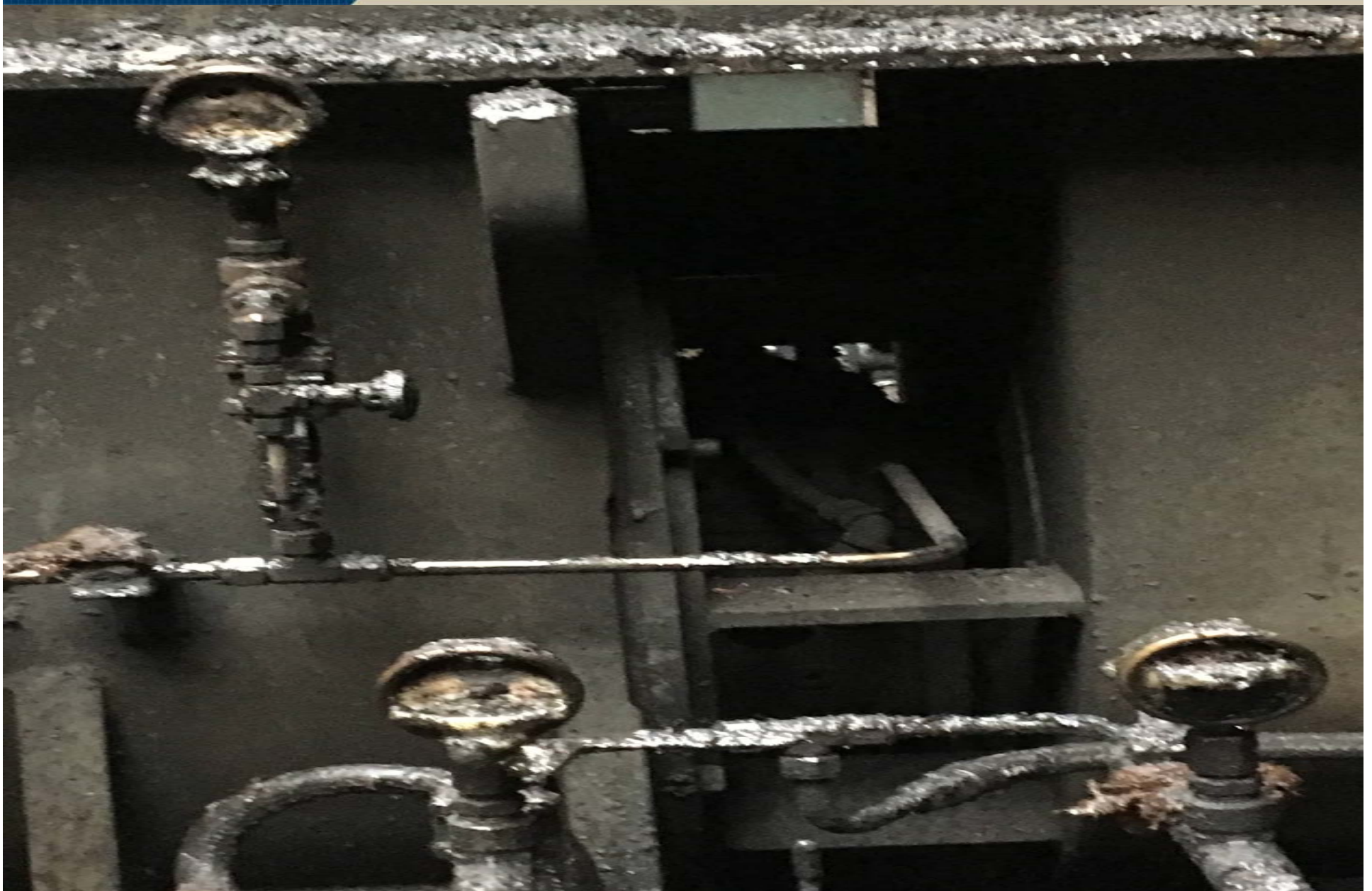


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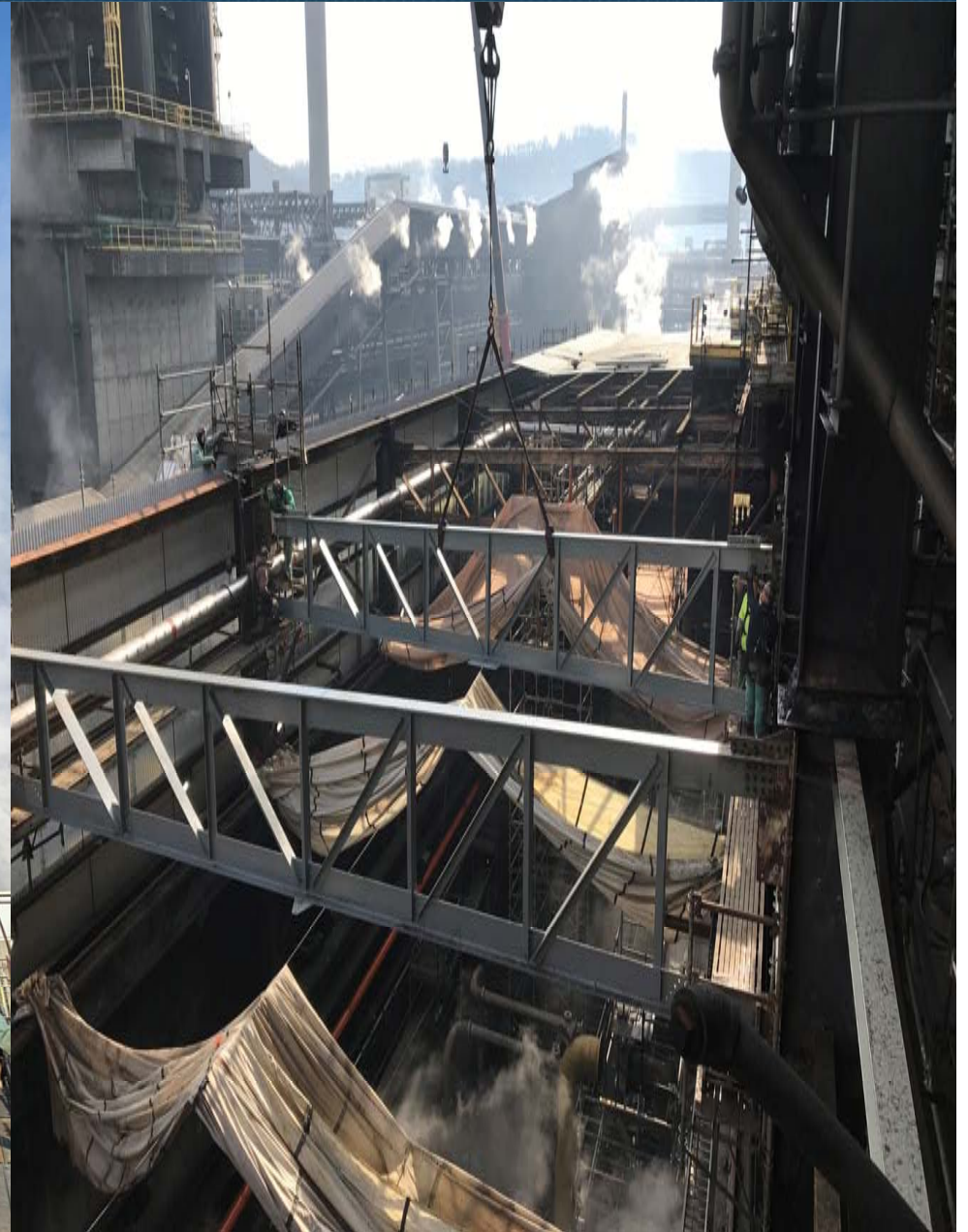


United States Steel Corporation





United States Steel Corporation





United States Steel Corporation



**Jim, Futrell, Vice President, Market Research
Allegheny Conference on Community Development
Hearing of House and Senate Democratic Policy Committee
February 7, 2019
Clairton Municipal Building Council Chambers, Clairton, Pa.**

Thank you, Senator Boscola, chair of the Senate Democratic Policy Committee and Rep. Sturla, chair of the House Democratic Policy Committee, as well as your fellow committee leaders – Senators Costa and Brewster and Rep. Davis – for the opportunity to speak today about the economic impact of the U.S. Steel Mon Valley Works operation.

I'm Jim Futrell, vice president of market research at the Allegheny Conference on Community Development. The mission of our organization is to improve the economy and quality of life in the 10-county Pittsburgh region.

Advanced manufacturing is one the region's five key economic sectors alongside energy, financial and business services, healthcare and life sciences and information technology.

The metals industry makes up the largest part of southwestern Pennsylvania's advanced manufacturing sector, with steel manufacturing at its heart.

The industry termed "steel mills and ferroalloy manufacturing" at this time employs more than 5,600 people in southwestern Pennsylvania. This represents the second largest concentration of employment in the country, behind Chicago.

U.S. Steel is the region's largest manufacturer with a presence that includes a corporate headquarters, corporate operations center, R&D center and most visibly the Mon Valley Works, consisting of three integrated manufacturing locations.

Today, U.S. Steel is Mon Valley's largest employer with approximately 3,000 individuals employed at three facilities in this geographic footprint. However, the Mon Valley Works provides economic benefits to the greater region.

Considering an IMPLAN economic impact model, we know that the 3,000 people employed directly at the Mon Valley Works support an additional 10,500 jobs throughout southwestern Pennsylvania. This captures U.S. Steel's supply chain and other businesses that benefit from spending by the company's workforce. Among these are wholesalers, railroads, trucking companies, utilities, banks, housing and restaurants.

The impact goes beyond employment. Last year, the Mon Valley Works generated \$4.6 billion in economic output throughout the region, roughly half of which is generated directly by these operations.

Annually, \$1.6 billion is contributed to our Gross Regional Product by U.S. Steel's Mon Valley Works – directly, indirectly and through the spending of its workforce. In the broader context, this one industry supports slightly over one percent of southwestern Pennsylvania's Gross Regional Product.

U. S. Steel has long been a major employer in the Pittsburgh Region, and the Allegheny Conference encourages the Policy Committee to work with the company to help address any concerns the committee members may have.”

This concludes my testimony. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in today's policy committee hearing.

COUNTY OF



ALLEGHENY

RICH FITZGERALD
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**Joint Senate and House Democratic Policy Committee Hearing on Improving Air Quality
Clairton Municipal Building – Wednesday, February 6, 2019
Testimony of Allegheny County Health Department Officials**

Good morning, Chair Boscola, Chair Sturla and members of the Joint Senate and House Democratic Policy Committee. I am Dr. Karen Hacker, Director of the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD). This afternoon, I am joined by my Health Department colleagues: Jim Kelly, Deputy Director for Environmental Health; Dr. LuAnn Brink, Chief Epidemiologist; Michael Parker, Solicitor; and members of the Board of Health.

The Health Department prioritizes air quality as one of this area's most pressing public health challenges. We all deserve clean air. We hold polluters accountable by using a variety of tools available through federal, state and local regulations including permitting, regulatory development, constant monitoring of emissions, and enforcement to the extent possible within the law. We use these actions to improve air quality conditions throughout all 130 municipalities.

ACHD has been responsible for federal air quality requirements since the 1970s when the EPA was founded, and the Clean Air Act was strengthened. We are also governed by the Pennsylvania Clean Air Act which authorized local air pollution control agencies such as the Allegheny County Health Department to implement the federal requirements. We implement these based on the federal Clean Air Act's health-based air quality standards.

While air quality in Allegheny County has improved over the last few decades, there are still problems. The soot of the past is far less common. It was made up of large particles that you can see along with very small particles that you cannot see. Air pollution today is largely invisible; made up of very small particles – also called PM 2.5 – and gases such as Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂). Despite having the strongest coke oven regulations in the country, Allegheny County is still out of compliance with the Clean Air Act largely due to PM 2.5 and SO₂ emissions recorded at the Liberty monitor. We must get the county into compliance with these standards which requires us to address U.S. Steel as the largest contributor of pollution at this monitor.

Over the last two years, the ACHD ramped up its enforcement efforts in several ways: We chose to leave behind negotiated consent orders because we weren't seeing needed progress. We began issuing direct enforcement orders and civil penalties. We expanded the Health Department's legal team. We increased inspections at U.S. Steel Coke Works. We increased penalties for violations through revisions to our civil penalty policy. We collaborated with the EPA to issue a Notice of Violation for air quality violations at U.S. Steel Edgar Thompson.



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In the past year, we used the new civil penalty policy to fine U.S. Steel Clairton Coke Works \$2 million - \$400,000 initially, followed by a \$1 million penalty and then another \$600,000 penalty. The increased fines alone were not enough to get the industry to comply with the regulations and cut their violations. So, we took even stronger unprecedented action and ordered U.S. Steel to take whatever measures necessary to reduce its emissions within the first half of 2019. If it fails to reduce its emissions after six months, our order compels the Clairton Coke Works to “hot idle” two of its worst polluting batteries until it meets the Department’s requirements. “Hot idle” means the batteries stay hot, but there is no production. Under the law, U.S. Steel has the right to due process and has appealed the order and recent fines. Despite the appeal, no stay has been issued and the requirements of the order remain in place.

We are operating under a new SO₂ state implementation plan – a plan designed to get the county into attainment with sulfur dioxide emissions. The plan is currently pending approval by the EPA. In addition, the state implementation plan for PM 2.5 to address non-compliance will be submitted this summer. Additionally, we are now proposing new coke oven rules to deal with fugitive emissions. U.S. Steel has hindered our progress by not providing information necessary for completing the regulatory analysis. Despite this, we plan to move forward and engage independent experts to revise the coke oven rules with or without U.S. Steel’s input. Regulatory actions must be thoughtful if we are to see the desired improvement and they must be methodically developed and evidence-based in order to survive any legal challenge.

Mr. Jim Kelly, Deputy Director of Environmental Health will now walk you through the events immediately following the fire at U.S. Steel as they evolved.

Before I begin, please allow me to define a few terms to inform this conversation:

- SO₂ - sulfur dioxide is a gas that is a respiratory irritant at high concentrations.
- SO₂ Standard was established in 2010 and is the existing health-based standard. It is 75 parts per billion based on the 3-year average of the 99th percentile of the yearly distribution of 1-hour daily maximum concentrations.
- SO₂ exceedance is a day with at least one 1-hour SO₂ average of > 75 PPB
- Desulfurization is the process of removing sulfur from the coke oven gas stream
- Hot idling means that the batteries that make coke remain hot but are not producing
- Air Quality Episode is an unexpected event such as a major breakdown causing air quality issues
- Poor dispersion is when air near the ground is cold with warmer air above acting as a “lid” on the valley, holding emissions down and preventing their spreading out.

The timeline from the fire at the Clairton Coke Works is as follows:

- At about 4:30 AM on December 24th, there was a fire at the U.S. Steel Clairton Plant. U.S. Steel called ACHD to report a breakdown of equipment at about 5:00 AM. The only information given the department regarding the fire was during a call later in the morning to the Air Quality Program Manager that Control Rooms 5 and 2 were shut down for the safety of the employees and equipment. U.S. Steel also indicated that natural gas was being substituted for coke oven gas to reduce emissions and flaring was also initiated to improve dispersion of pollution.

- The department posted information about the fire on our Facebook page that day and the public was advised of the potential for air quality issues. The post noted that we had not yet seen any exceedance of air quality standards following the fire.
- The first SO₂ exceedances at the Liberty monitor were observed after the fire on December 26 and December 28 at the Liberty monitor. This is a monitor at South Allegheny High School that gives the most direct measurement of emissions from the Clairton Plant. At this time, the exceedances were not considered unusual because occasional exceedances of SO₂ can often be seen when there is poor air dispersion. Last year, we had 11 exceedances and in 2017, there were 18. All of them occurred during normal operation of the plant in similar ranges of 76-171 ppb and were not associated with any breakdowns.
- On December 31, U.S. Steel provided a mandatory 7-day follow-up breakdown report. Breakdown reports are required by the plant's permit to give the department an assessment of equipment failure and includes the cause, what emissions are released, how to reduce the emissions and when the equipment will be repaired. The report indicated that amount of emissions was considered "light to moderate." The report also indicated that the time for the facility to be back in operation was "hours."
- There were additional sulfur dioxide exceedances at the Liberty monitor on January 2 and 3. On January 4, the Director was informed, and the department requested a conference with Clairton plant officials. This was also the day that U.S. Steel was able to enter the building as it had sustained significant structural damage which required a crane to lift the roof. U.S. Steel informed the department that the damage from the fire would render the sulfur removal process (desulfurization) inoperable and the condition would possibly last for a significant length of time. The Health Department then prepared to issue a public notice that there was a risk for additional SO₂ exceedances. The department also prepared to order U.S. Steel to extend coking times; however, U.S. Steel reported that they were already undertaking several important and effective mitigation measures. They had already extended coking times at multiple batteries, thus reducing the amount of coke oven gas produced. The use of natural gas was also expanded and was now being used in significant quantities in the boilers on this day. We considered the use of natural gas in the boilers as an important step because emissions from the boilers have been shown to have a large impact on the SO₂ emissions at the Liberty monitor. Flaring was also still being used to dilute the impact of sulfur dioxide.
- Given the extent of the emission mitigation efforts, the department expected that this approach would significantly improve the situation. We also required U.S. Steel to provide regular reports of any fire-related activity and required additional mitigation strategies to be implemented in case of further exceedances. There were, in fact, no exceedances from January 4-7.
- On January 8, there were two more exceedances at the Liberty monitor. At this time, the department determined that despite the mitigation efforts, there would continue to be some level of risk for additional exceedances. Out of an abundance of precaution, the Health Department issued a formal public health alert on January 9, recommending that Mon Valley residents,

especially those that may be sensitive to sulfur dioxide, limit their outdoor activities while repairs are being made to the factory.

- The department was prepared to issue an order to further extend coking times; however, U.S. Steel immediately implemented additional required mitigation strategies including further extending coking times and increasing the use of natural gas. These efforts were more than what we would have required. To date, there have been no further exceedances at the Liberty monitor; however, the recent exceedance at the North Braddock monitor is of concern due to the flaring at Irvin. Once information concerning this exceedance has been analyzed, an appropriate enforcement action will follow – as we announced earlier this week.
- ACHD is still reviewing all possible enforcement options for permit related violations. The extent of the violation penalties can only be assessed after the incident concludes. Once the problem is fixed and the Health Department can evaluate this incident, the company faces civil penalties for permit and Article XXI Air Pollution Control violations.

A few important points about the event and the effect on health by Dr. LuAnn Brink:

- After the fire, the exceedances of sulfur dioxide recorded at the Liberty monitor were very brief.
- In the Code of Federal Regulations, which represents the peer-reviewed literature used to create the 1-hour rule, they have determined 400 ppb as the level at which an uncompromised group have moderate changes in lung function, and 200 ppb as the lowest threshold at which some vulnerable individuals have lung function changes.
- At no time did the sulfur dioxide levels recorded at the Liberty monitor approach levels indicative of an emergency (800 ppb for a 24-hour period)
- The January 9 alert was issued out of an abundance of caution and was intended to make sensitive populations aware of the chance for higher than normal sulfur dioxide in the coming days while U.S. Steel finalized their mitigation strategies. As you are aware, there have been no additional exceedances since January 8 at the Liberty monitor.
- We conducted an analysis of emergency department visits for asthma before and after the fire. This is also known as syndromic surveillance and is used by health departments all over the country to examine the impact of events. This analysis determined that there were an equal number of emergency department visits in each time frame.
- Given that many residents may not be able to go to an emergency department, we have also looked at “Smell Pittsburgh” and complaints called into our department. These were also equal before and after the incident.
- We do not have access to visits that occur at primary care facilities so there is always more to discover.

Since the alert, the Health Department has been monitoring the repair process and the air quality. ACHD was able to enter the building on January 11 only after taking safety training given the risks of entering the damaged building. The Health Department has provided extensive information to the public. Our monitoring data has always been available on the website and now we have recommitted to increased public reporting with weekly updates, daily information on our Facebook and website, and daily air quality updates distributed via the Allegheny Alert public notification system. We want residents throughout the county to have access to reliable information on air quality in a timely manner and we recognize that we can always improve.

We have also:

- Held regular meeting with advocates. Since this incident, we have had two phone calls with air advocates to share details of the fire and resulting actions, answer questions and get recommendations for additional communication
- Distributed a sulfur dioxide fact sheet to providers and residents
- Conducted outreach to pediatricians and school nurses to explain the situation and provide general information and resources
- Monitored emergency room visit data relative to respiratory health and found no unusual activity
- Provided updates for projected poor air dispersion days on our Facebook page and through Allegheny Alerts
- Encouraged U.S. Steel to provide public information
- Participated in the January 22 Clairton town meeting hosted by city officials to share information directly with area residents

Earlier this week, our Air Quality program installed a sulfur dioxide monitor at the Clairton Education Center. Hourly readings from this monitor are already available on our website. In the coming weeks, we will be installing a second sulfur dioxide monitor in the Mon Valley near U.S. Steel's Irvin Works, where coke oven gas is currently being flared. We also plan to install a benzene monitor near the Irvin Works to assess any benzene risks to local residents.

In summary, the Allegheny County Health Department will continue to be proactive and aggressive to improve air quality in our county, as our actions indicate. We will continue to improve our communication via our current strategies through additional opportunities such as mobile phone applications and direct communication with citizens, municipal leaders and legislators.

Since this most recent incident in Clairton, we have been asked about additional tools and resources that would be helpful in improving our region's air quality. We have been working with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and legislative staff on these issues, and are happy to share our recommendations with you here today:

- Update existing air pollution episode criteria in state code, which hasn't happened since 1990 by reevaluating levels for stages of alerts and emergencies based on the most recent information from EPA along with specific actions by regulatory agencies;
- Provide stronger regulations to allow for immediate shut-downs of any contributing industry if clean air standards are exceeded at monitors;
- Mandate that coke plants and all industry reduce production during air action days; determining the correct amount for reduction will require further investigation;
- Make the Health Department's more stringent coke oven regulations the uniform standard across the Commonwealth and adopt our forthcoming changes regarding fugitive emissions;
- Mandate industry to notify affected communities when accidents occur that have the potential to impact the health of the public; and
- Increase monetary penalties for air quality violations statewide by adopting the EPA's civil penalty maximum.

The Health Department staff looks forward to continuing discussions regarding these potential policy solutions and we welcome recommendations from this panel. We are all entitled to clean air. I am happy to offer myself and any of my staff as resources. We all share the same goals as the legislature in improving our region's air quality and quality of life. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this issue today. We are happy to take questions.

Don Furko
President USW Local 1557

Pennsylvania Senate and House Democratic Policy Committees
Joint Public Hearing on USS Clairton Plant and Improving Air Quality

Thursday, February 7 at 12:00 p.m.
Clairton Municipal Building, Council Chambers
Clairton, PA

- Good afternoon, my name is Don Furko and I am the President of the United Steelworkers Local 1557, which is the Local Union for U.S. Steel Clairton Coke Works. I represent nearly 1,200 hardworking men and women at Clairton Works Plant, and I am here this afternoon to provide comments on their behalf.
- I want to thank you for holding today's Joint Policy Committee hearing on two issues that our union and our members believe are very important -- Improving Air Quality and the future of the Clairton Coke Plant.
- The United Steelworkers have embraced environmental stewardship for quite a while. In 2006, the USW partnered with the Sierra Club to create the Blue-Green Alliance, an organization that now also includes the Communications Workers of America, the NRDC, the SEIU, and the National Wildlife Federation. There is also language in our Collective Bargaining Agreement regarding our environmental committee, of which my Vice President Rose Bezy is our chairperson.
- Every newly-hired employee of the company goes through a New Employee Orientation, of which the core values of the company are introduced with Environmental Compliance only below Safety. Our members are routinely contacted on environmental issues, and while we have a significant number of our members solely assigned to keeping the plant in environmental compliance, we all know that we are responsible for protecting the environment.
- Clairton Works is critical for the future of the entire Mon Valley Works. The Coke produced at Clairton Works feeds every blast furnace in the Corporation, including the ones at Edgar Thomson Works in Braddock. From there the slabs are sent to Irvin Works to be rolled into coils. Overall there are about 3000 employees employed at the three plants.
- But beyond Mon Valley Works there are many others who depend on these mills economically. According to the PA Steel Alliance, for every steel job there are five non-steel jobs that are supported. This includes the vendors that supply parts to the plants, the businesses that our members visit on their way to and from work, etc.
- This is what is so concerning when our members hear of enforcement orders that will idle coke batteries, or when others in the public suggest idling batteries. This would be a short-time solution with long-term consequences. At best, idling of coke batteries would damage the refractory brick, which would in turn end up causing more pollution. But the

worst-case scenario is that we'd end up losing the coke batteries. This was almost the case when we had layoffs in 2009, and I know the company had gone to great lengths to not have to idle batteries during the latest economic downturn.

- Simply put, if US Steel ends up idling batteries, our members will lose their jobs. This will begin a chain of events that will have a devastating impact on them, their families, and our communities across the Mon Valley.
- We are very proud of having played an important role in the improvements in air and water quality in the Pittsburgh Region over the past decades. Today, the County's air and water quality has never been better.
- The Clairton Coke Plant is the most productive and energy efficient Coke Plant in the United States. Our union recognizes that it must operate in compliance with the most rigorous and stringent environmental regulatory standards in the country. .
- Collaboration between the United Steelworkers, U. S. Steel, our state elected officials, and the Allegheny County Health Department over the years has been a major driver resulting in the continuous improvement to the Pittsburgh Region's environment.
- We are committed to continue to do our part, and we are confident the company is also committed to do its part. We all must work together. Idling batteries and forcing job loss is not the answer. This will only result in economic hardship and suffering for our union members and their families.
- It is important now for all of us to come together and work cooperatively, to find a solution that strikes the right balance, and will protect not only our shared environment, but also the members of the USW -- the hardworking men and women that have been the pride of our region's steel industry for generations.
- As the President of USW Local 1557 and on behalf of our 1,200 members at Clairton Works, I'm confident that we will work every day to help the coke plant maintain compliance and operate the facility in an environmentally responsible manner. As committed as our union is to the future of coke and steel making Mon Valley, we are equally committed to protecting our shared environment.
- Thank you

Jeff Nobers, Executive Director
The Builders Guild of Western Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania Senate and House Democratic Policy Committees
Hearing on U. S. Steel Clairton Plant and Improving Air Quality

February 7 at 12:00 p.m.

- Good afternoon, my name is Jeff Nobers and I am the Executive Director of the Builders Guild of Western Pennsylvania; a labor/management initiative of the building and construction trade unions of Western PA and local professional contractor associations.
- The Builders Guild Board is comprised of nine professional contractor associations and the 16 regional building and construction trades as well as the Pittsburgh Regional Building Trades Council. These organizations in turn represent hundreds of professional contractors and tens of thousands union tradespeople.
- Our mission is to promote ensure and promote quality construction for our region, provide a forum for labor and management to work together on issues of common concern, and to create career opportunities for men and women interested in working in working in our industry. Our trades and contractors jointly expend some 35 million dollars annually training thousands of apprentices for long-term careers which pay family-sustaining wages and benefits.
- I appreciate the opportunity to make brief remarks before the Pennsylvania Senate and House Democratic Policy Committees this afternoon to bring to your attention to the important and long relationship between our members, the U. S. Steel Mon Valley Works, and the environment that we all share, as residents and neighbors in the Pittsburgh community. Our members are committed to protecting our shared environment.
- In addition to more traditional construction projects, our members perform a significant amount of work at manufacturing and industrial operations, power generation plants, and throughout the Marcellus Shale region. The U. S. Steel Mon Valley Works is one of our largest industrial employers which has provided a steady and reliable source of employment for generations of members of the Building Trades and local contractors.
- Our trades and contractors are proud of playing an important role in the amazing improvements in air and water quality in the Pittsburgh Region over the past several decades. We are committed to continuing to be leaders in our communities to do our part, and to continue to protect our environment.
- We believe strongly that the Pittsburgh Region can continue to have a healthy environment, a strong manufacturing base and a growing and vibrant economy. We can have and deserve both, good paying jobs provided by manufacturing and industry, as well as, a clean and healthy environment for our families and communities.

- Our tradespeople and contractors are working with U. S. Steel around the clock, regardless of weather conditions, such as the arctic temperatures we experienced a little over a week ago; helping U. S. Steel to repair the facilities at the Clairton Plant that were damaged by the fire on the early morning of December 24, 2018. We will continue to do so until this project is successfully completed creating an improved facility.
- Approximately 120 skilled union tradespeople are on-site at the Clairton Plant daily - Steamfitters, Iron Workers, Electricians and many others. As a side note: during routine operations approximately 60 of our members work throughout the U.S. Steel's Mon Valley facilities daily.
- It is a top priority for our trades and our contractors to help U. S. Steel return to normal operations, and for the Coke Plant to operate safely for U.S. Steels employees, and the community and the environment.
- The Clairton Coke Plant is a critical part of the Mon Valley Works, its future, and the future of the company. The future of those operations is also very important to our members, the thousands of employees of U.S. Steel and to the economy of the Pittsburgh Region.
- United States Steel is one the region's largest employers. Providing good paying jobs not only to their own employees, but to many service providers, contractors and others in the supply chain that are needed to produce quality steel products.
- We really should be working together to support this company and their employees. To find balanced, rational solutions that protect our shared environment, as well as the good paying jobs and economic growth that come from our region's historic steel manufacturing companies.
- With that in mind, I respectfully ask, on behalf of our members, that you work with U. S. Steel, and find solutions that will not only continue to benefit our environment, but also allow for the continued production of coke, iron and steel at the company's Mon Valley Works.

Steamfitters

LOCAL UNION #449

Kenneth J. Broadbent, Business Manager
Joseph M. Little, Secretary - Treasurer
James E. Reynolds, President

James A. Harding, Business Agent
Martin J. Noone III, Business Agent
William T. Panitzke, Business Agent

Mark S. Rovnan, Business Agent
Regis P. Ryan, Business Agent
Timothy A. Webster, Business Agent

Kenneth J. Broadbent
Business Manager
Steamfitters Local Union 449

Pennsylvania Senate and House Democratic Policy Committees
Joint Public Hearing on Improving Air Quality
February 7 at 12:00 p.m.
Clairton Municipal Building, Council Chambers,
551 Ravensburg Boulevard, Clairton, PA

-
- My name is Kenneth J. Broadbent. I am the Business Manager for the Steamfitters Local Union 449. Our union is a member of the Pittsburgh Regional Building & Construction Trades.
 - Steamfitters Local 449 was established in 1913. We represent nearly 2,700 union-trained steamfitters and are affiliated with the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry of the United States and Canada.
 - Our members are highly trained craftsmen who fabricate, install and service piping systems. Many of our members live throughout the Mon Valley Communities.
 - Many of our members are also directly involved in helping U. S. Steel repair the facilities at the Clairton Plant that were damaged by the fire on the early morning of December 24.
 - First, let me tell you, our members are fully committed to helping U. S. Steel repair the damaged facilities at Clairton, as quickly and safely as possible.
 - This is not easy work. The damage was significant. And the circumstances involving the repairs are challenging.
 - Our Union members are dedicated to this project, and we are working with our contractors and U. S. Steel around the clock, regardless of weather conditions, such as the freezing cold temperatures last week.
 - Thanks to the hard work, skill and dedication of our members, once completed, this facility will be better than it was before. It will be a new and improved facility.

- It is a top priority for our Union and our contractors to help U. S. Steel return to normal operations, and for the Coke Plant to operate safely, while protecting our environment. That is the goal!
- I would like to also offer a few thoughts on U. S. Steel, its relationship with our Union, and with the Building Trades.
- For generations, members in the Steamfitters and other Building Trades have found gainful employment performing skilled work to help maintain and improve the facilities throughout U. S. Steel's Mon Valley operations.
- The U. S. Steel Clairton Coke Plant is a critical to the future of the company's Mon Valley Works. It is their only remaining Coke Plant, and you cannot make steel without coke.
- Our union members take great pride in the quality of work they provide at these facilities. Working through our local contractors, the coke, iron and steel operations have provided good paying jobs and steady employment for many years for our members.
- Our union members are also very proud of our leadership role in helping the Pittsburgh Region become what it is today. This includes our efforts to build an environmentally friendly and sustainable economy for our communities, families and neighbors to enjoy.
- We all share our environment. And as I said before, the members of Steamfitters 449 also live here, and we want our families, friends and neighbors to continue to live, work and raise our children here -- for generations to come.
- **However, we need good paying jobs to support our families and our communities.**
- The good paying jobs provided by the U. S. Steel Mon Valley Works are a critical part of Pittsburgh's diverse economy.
- **We have been very successful because we work together – that includes labor, industry and our government leadership.**
- Moving forward, I would ask that you work cooperatively with U. S. Steel and find a balanced solution that will protect the environment, AND the good paying jobs provided by the Mon Valley Works.
- Thank you.

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Remarks for Public Testimony
Joint PA Senate and House Democratic Policy Committee
Hearing on US Steel Clairton Coke Works Explosion, Air Quality, and Community Notification Issues
Clairton Municipal Building
551 Ravensburg Blvd
Clairton, PA 15025

February 7, 2019
12:00 pm

Good Afternoon: I would like to thank the Senate and House Democratic Policy Committees for inviting me to speak this afternoon on the topic of health impacts of air pollution, specifically pediatric asthma, based on my ongoing work in the Pittsburgh area.

Asthma is a disease of disparities and disproportionately affects minorities and the poor. Among children, asthma is one of the top causes of missed school days, accounting for 14 million missed school days annually. Childhood asthma impacts the ability to learn, participate in physical activity and to socialize. Consequently, asthma can potentially impair post secondary education and career opportunities as well as detrimentally effect long term health outcomes by contributing to physical inactivity and obesity. Asthma is a multifactorial disease caused by an interaction between genetic and environmental factors, including but not limited to allergies, respiratory infections, environmental tobacco smoke, outdoor air pollution, nutrition and psychological stress. The timing of exposure during the prenatal period, infancy and early childhood is also important.

My research team recently evaluated asthma prevalence and outcomes in 1,207 school aged children residing near point sources of air pollution in the Pittsburgh region. Approximately 50% of participants were male, 52% were African American and 61% had public health insurance, which is a marker of lower socioeconomic status. 82% of participants resided in the prevailing wind direction of the nearest point source of outdoor air pollution and the mean linear distance of their residences to the nearest point source was 2.2 miles. Using data collected from the mobile monitoring platform developed and operated by investigators at Carnegie Mellon University, we found that the mean annual PM_{2.5} exposure was 11.9 (\pm 2.3) ug/m³, which is barely below the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) limit of 12 ug/m³.

The overall prevalence of physician diagnosed asthma in this high risk group was 22.5% which is more than double the national and state rates of 9 and 10%, respectively. After adjustment for effects of male gender, African American race and poverty, exposure to higher levels of PM_{2.5} was associated with 1.6 times increased odds ratio of asthma diagnosis. In contrast, after adjustment for these same factors, obesity and environmental tobacco smoke exposure had no impact on asthma prevalence.

Among the children with a history of physician diagnosed asthma, the rate of uncontrolled disease was 59.3% which is much higher than the national rate of 40%. Again, after adjustment for gender, race and poverty, exposure to higher levels of PM_{2.5} was associated with 4.7 times increased odds ratio of uncontrolled asthma. In contrast, after adjustment for these same factors, obesity and environmental tobacco smoke had no impact on asthma control.

Clairton was one of the schools that participated in this project. 213 elementary school children from Clairton enrolled; 49% were male, 63% were African American and 92% had public health insurance. The mean residential distance from the Clairton coke facility was 1.0 ± 0.3 miles.

Using data collected from CMU's mobile monitoring platform, the mean annual PM_{2.5} exposure was 13.1 ± 2.3 ug/m³, which is above the EPA limit of 12 ug/m³. Moreover, 60% of children participating had a mean annual PM_{2.5} exposure above the EPA threshold of 12.0 ug/m³.

The prevalence of physician diagnosed asthma among these Clairton school children was 18.4% as compared to the national rate of 9% and the state rate of 10%. Additionally, 15% of children screened positive for risk of asthma, meaning that they have a history of symptoms consistent with asthma but have not been formally diagnosed with asthma by a physician. Of those with physician diagnosed asthma, 64% were poorly controlled as compared to the national rate of 38% and the state rate of 27%.

After identifying the high asthma prevalence and rate of poor control among these at risk children, my research team began conducting school based asthma clinics in an effort to improve health outcomes. To date, approximately 75 schoolchildren from Clairton, Woodland Hills and Propel Hazelwood have participated in the school based asthma clinic.

Analysis of the results from the first 50 children enrolled, show significant improvements in visit compliance, asthma knowledge and asthma control after enrollment in the program. We currently have 15 school children enrolled in the program at Clairton. These children are seen for visits at regular intervals based on the severity of their asthma. Approximately half of the children enrolled have mild intermittent asthma and do not require daily controller medications. The other half had persistent asthma and required addition or adjustment of daily controller medications at prior visits. At visits on November 28, 2018 and December 12, 2018, all participants had gained good control of their asthma.

After the fire occurred at the Clairton coke facility on December 24, 2018, multiple exceedances of SO₂ emissions, which are known to exacerbate asthma, were documented on December 26 and 28, 2018 and January 3, 4, and 8, 2019. Subsequently, regularly scheduled asthma follow-up visits were conducted at Clairton on January 14, 2019. Fourteen of the fifteen students participating in the program were in attendance. None reported recent respiratory viral illness.

Five (36%) of the participants had significant decreases in their lung function. Two of these students had documented increased use of albuterol rescue medication since school resumed in January and both of these students were placed on oral steroids to control their worsening asthma. In comparison, 9 children are currently enrolled in the same asthma program in Hazelwood and all 9 were seen for a regularly scheduled visit on January 7, 2019 and none had decreases in their lung function. One did report a recent viral respiratory illness as well as increased albuterol rescue use, but her lung function was normal and no additional medication was prescribed.

These results show a temporal relationship between SO₂ exceedances and deteriorating asthma control in children residing near the Clairton Coke facility. These deteriorations are not due to other common asthma triggers since none of the children from Clairton had a recent viral respiratory illness or change in exposure to second hand tobacco smoke or allergens. The absence of asthma deterioration in the Hazelwood cohort suggests that the local exceedances in SO₂ in Clairton contributed to worsening asthma in those schoolchildren. These results illustrate the need for continued air pollution monitoring and also demonstrate the strong need for a system to warn at risk individuals of harmful exposures so that they can take timely precautions to protect their health.

In summary, the residents of Clairton and the Mon Valley are exposed to high levels of pollution that impact health outcomes including but not limited to asthma, COPD, heart disease, and malignancy. This exposure has been ongoing for decades and now superimposed on that, are the recent exceedances in SO₂ following the Clairton Coke works fire as well as the delayed notification of these exceedances to the public.

Additionally, for approximately one month, residents of the Mon Valley have been under an alert from the ACHD encouraging them, especially sensitive populations, to limit their outdoor activities until further notice. Many affected residents do not understand what this warning means and need advice that is much more specific and timely. Moreover, it is impractical to ask these residents to limit outdoor activities for such an indeterminate amount of time and it is also unhealthy for their children to be kept inside and unable to participate in outdoor physical activity during this indeterminate length of time.

In closing, three areas need to be addressed. First, policy change must occur to ensure reduction of exposure to outdoor air pollution. Second, an efficient and effective protocol must be developed to ensure that the public is made aware in a timely manner of both acute threats to public health and specific, appropriate actions to undertake to ensure protection of their health. Third, community members must be supported by all in their efforts to voice concerns and effect change regarding the impact of local air pollution on their health outcomes.



GROUP AGAINST SMOG & POLLUTION
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Remarks for Public Testimony

Joint PA Senate and House Democratic Policy Committee
Hearing on US Steel Clairton Coke Works Explosion, Air Quality, and Community Notification Issues
Clairton Municipal Building
551 Ravensburg Blvd
Clairton, PA 15025

February 7, 2019

Dear Chair Boscola and Distinguished Members of the Pennsylvania Senate and House:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak at this joint Senate-House Democratic Policy Committee hearing. My name is Rachel Filippini and I am the executive director of the Group Against Smog and Pollution.

For fifty years we've worked through education and advocacy to improve air quality throughout southwestern Pennsylvania. For fifty years, U.S. Steel's Clairton Coke and Edgar Thomson facilities have been part of – or *the* cause of – air quality problems in our region. Their chronic failure to comply with health-based air quality regulations has burdened the residents of the Mon Valley and beyond. The Christmas Eve fire at Clairton Coke is just the latest in a long line of insults to the community.

While a part of today's discussion should be about the fire at Clairton Coke and how to ensure the community is better-informed and protected should such an incident occur in the future, I believe the discussion needs to focus on US Steel's air pollution problems and the devastating health consequences the Mon Valley community has experienced for decades.

The anger and frustration you are hearing from your constituents – and reading about in the newspaper and on social media – is not just about the fire, the poor air quality it created, and the initial lack of information provided to the public. This anger, anxiety, and frustration are the results of residents enduring decades of air pollution while seeing enforcement of law that has – to date – proven ineffective.

While some industries struggle with compliance from time to time, the County Health Department, EPA, and US Steel have been engaged in court battles or settlement negotiations continually for the past 48 years. Major settlements with US Steel occurred in 1979, 1993, 2007, 2008, 2014, and 2016. According to the ACHD, after the 2016 judgement, emissions from the plant actually got worse. Overall compliance with local air laws declined from 94% in 2014 to just 75% last year. What would happen if everyone obeyed red lights 75% of the time?

In a 60-day notice to sue Clairton in 2016, the environmental organization Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future documented that Clairton Coke Works had over 6,700 air pollution violations between January 1, 2012 and May 31, 2015. That's an average of over five times a day, every day for nearly three and a half years.

According to the ACHD June 2018 Enforcement Order against U.S. Steel,¹ in addition to its decreased rate of compliance, U.S. Steel employees were actually taking actions that skew or disrupt inspectors' observations.

¹ https://www.alleghenycounty.us/uploadedFiles/Allegheny_Home/Health_Department/Programs/

Specifically, the U.S. Steel employees were walking in front of inspectors and applying a mud-like mixture to emission points so they could obscure the emissions. ACHD inspectors also observed partial pushing of coke from ovens to avoid the potential violations otherwise associated with a complete pushing of coke. ACHD inspectors also observed the removal of flue caps thereby diverting emissions that would have otherwise traveled to the combustion stack, where the emissions are monitored. By removing the flue caps in this manner, U.S. Steel effectively avoided violations attributable to stack emissions. ACHD inspectors also observed offtake pipe caps being cracked open on a sealed oven. By doing so, emissions that would have been released by the door areas are diverted away from inspectors conducting a door inspection; thereby avoiding potential door inspection violations.

These are not actions taken by a company trying to be a good neighbor, by a company trying to do better. These are actions taken by a company trying to deceive our regulators. These are actions taken by company that has a total disregard for the community where they operate.

U.S. Steel's troubles extend beyond the Clairton Coke Works. In November of 2017, the Health Department and the federal Environmental Protection Agency issued a joint Notice of Violation against US Steel's Edgar Thompson Works and now the US Department of Justice is also involved.

Over and over and over again U.S. Steel breaks the law and it is the community that suffers. They suffer by way of asthma attacks, heart attacks, strokes, cancer, and premature death. According to the Center for Healthy Environments and Communities at the University of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County ranks in the top 2% of counties in the U.S. for cancer risk from air pollution.² The two census tracts with the highest cancer risk are located in or near Clairton and reflect the contribution from the nearby U.S. Steel Clairton Coke Works and other facilities.³ When EPA first determined that coke oven gas was a carcinogen, its 1984 Assessment of Coke Oven Emissions relied heavily on research of high mortality rates for coke oven workers in Allegheny County.⁴

Aside from the mortality caused by air pollution, I want to be sure you understand the daily burden and ill-effects caused by air pollution. Most often our immediate interactions with the air are through our noses. Even when the skies look clean, our noses can tell there is a problem because of foul smells. There have been, for instance, over 740 air quality complaints via the SmellPGH app from February 2nd to February 5th, that is nearly 200/day. A frequent complaint we hear is the over-powering smell of rotten eggs, or hydrogen sulfide (H₂S). U.S. Steel's Clairton Coke Works is by far the largest emitter of H₂S in the county, emitting more than 109 tons in 2017.⁵ GASP documented that the state standard for H₂S has been violated fifty times a year on average over the past six years at the Liberty Borough monitor in the Mon Valley. Just this past weekend, the 24-hour average H₂S readings spiked to 22 ppb; that is more than 4 times the standard of 5 ppb. These noxious odors disrupt sleep; discourage people from spending time outdoors; can irritate the eyes, nose, and throat; and generally, make life extremely unpleasant.

I'm sure you have all noticed the recent spate of extremely poor air quality days. The ACHD has been doing a better job in the last month informing the public about poor air dispersion days. These are days when air pollution does not easily disperse allowing fine particulates, sulfur dioxide, and other hazardous air pollutants to

Air_Quality/ACHD-USSteel-Enforcement-Order-062818.pdf

² <http://www.chec.pitt.edu/documents/PRETA/CHEC%20PRETA%20HAPs%20Report.pdf>

³ <http://www.chec.pitt.edu/documents/PRETA/CHEC%20PRETA%20HAPs%20Report.pdf>

⁴ US EPA, "Carcinogen Assessment of Coke Oven Emissions," EPA/600/6-82/003F (NTIS PB84170182), 1982. Available online: <https://cfpub.epa.gov/ncea/risk/recorddisplay.cfm?deid=47897>. Research of Allegheny County coke workers discussed extensively in "Epidemiologic Studies" section of Chapter VI.

⁵ A Department of Environmental Protection's eFACTS online data portal

remain trapped closer to the ground for extended periods of time. On these poor air quality days, people, especially those with asthma or other chronic respiratory or cardiac conditions are told to take extra precaution and limit outdoor activity. The burden of protection should not fall exclusively on the public. These days are predicted in advance, so what steps can industry take to limit their impact? Can coking times be extended, for instance during low dispersion days?

We believe that ACHD must do a better job of holding U.S. Steel accountable, but so too must our local and state leaders.

For the state leaders in attendance today:

1. I concur with Dr. Gentile that, “an efficient and effective protocol must be developed to ensure that the public is made aware in a timely manner of both acute threats to public health and specific, appropriate actions to undertake to ensure protection of their health.”
2. Require a full accounting of the cause of the fire and steps US Steel will take to ensure something similar will not happen in the future.
3. Empower the Health Department to be a strong enforcement agency and ensure that they are taking all steps necessary to protect public health. The health department’s charge is to protect, promote, and preserve the health and well-being of all Allegheny County residents, particularly the most vulnerable. Support them when they take strong enforcement action against any polluter and call them out when they do not.
4. If the laws on the books aren’t strong enough to protect public health then do your part to help strengthen them.
5. Ensure your local offices are equipped to handle community concerns. Meaning if your constituents call with an air quality concern-you and your staff know how to help them?
6. Industry lobbyists have the time and resources to visit their government officials. In general, the public does not. Make sure you have or seek out information on all sides of an issue including the public health and environmental impacts.

Eventually the damage from the fire will be fixed and the plant will be back up and running as it has in the past. I hope you will remain as interested in improving air quality in Allegheny County in six months, one year, five years from now as you are today.

There is a lot to love about the Pittsburgh region. We have top-rated universities, world-class health care, abundant cultural and natural amenities, and winning sports teams. Unfortunately, air quality is not something Pittsburghers love or brag about. Let’s attack our air pollution problem like we would any other public health threat.



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Remarks for Public Testimony

Joint PA Senate and House Democratic Policy Committee
Hearing on US Steel Clairton Coke Works Explosion, Air Quality, and Community Notification Issues
Clairton Municipal Building
551 Ravensburg Blvd
Clairton, PA 15025

February 7, 2019

Dear Chair Boscola and Distinguished Members of the Pennsylvania Senate and House:

Thank you for holding this hearing. I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the ongoing community impacts to air quality and public health following the explosion at the US Steel's Clairton Coke Works on December 24, 2018.

In Allegheny County, we should feel confident knowing that the air we breathe will not make us sick or cause cancer, asthma, or other diseases. We have the right to live and work in clean, safe-and healthy environments.

Pittsburgh has made improvements from the industrial days of the past, but there is still a long way to go before the air is truly healthy and safe for everyone. Our county is in the top 2 percent of counties nationwide for risk of cancer from air toxics. The Allegheny County Health Department should take action to rapidly and significantly reduce air pollution in the County so that our risk is comparable to, or better than, other urban counties. Our children have significantly higher rates of asthma compared to national averages. Asthma affects a child's ability to learn and thrive.

It is the job of our local elected officials to act as the ultimate protector of the health of the people of Allegheny County. Protection of residents' health should be the highest priority for our public servants. Sadly, that may not be the case today. It is not acceptable for elected officials to allow industries to create higher cancer risks, higher respiratory and cardiovascular disease rates, higher rate of asthma, and deny local citizens' rights to clean air.

Everyone knows that air pollution is bad for your health. No one wants to breathe dirty air, get sick, or to see our children, our parents, our friends or neighbors get sick or die before their time. The time for action is now. Pittsburgh has a history of coming together to meet its challenges.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak today. I would also encourage members of this hearing panel to talk with local residents living in this community. Their voices need to be heard. Their experiences need to be invited to the table.

I also encourage each person here to go and observe the peachtree flare from the top of 5th street in Glassport—to hear the constant jet engine-like sound and smell of un-desulfurized coking gas that is burned in the open air—and to know what it is like to live in proximity to three massive flaring ports located above the valley in a football-field-sized, scorched area, that looks like a place out of Mordor from *Lord of the Rings*.

Context: Allegheny County Already Has Had Serious Air Quality Problems Even Before this US Steel Incident

Even before this explosion at the US Steel Clairton Coke Works, our region has been suffering from some of the worst air pollution in the United States.

The American Lung Association’s (ALA) annual “State of the Air” (SOTA) report for 2018 again put the Pittsburgh region on notice. Allegheny County once again received straight Fs for ozone, daily particulate matter levels and long-term particulate matter levels. This was the only county outside of California to get straight Fs for all three measures of air pollution.

For the daily measure for fine particle pollution, the metro area’s rank fell from 17th worst in the country to 10th worst out of 201 areas. Of all counties in Pennsylvania, only Allegheny County experienced an increase in the frequency of unhealthy days for this pollutant (from 6.0 to 8.5 days). The frequency of high particle pollution days was the highest for any county east of Utah.

The Pittsburgh region was one of four regions with an increase in the number of “spikes” in particles. Despite this deterioration in air quality, the metro area’s rank for annual particulates held steady overall as the 8th worst air in the country out of 187 places. The Pittsburgh region has occupied this spot for the third report in a row. The metro area has the worst air in the country outside of California.

The Pittsburgh metro area also showed poor performance for ground level ozone. While the three-state, 12-county metro area showed general improvement, Allegheny County levels remained high enough that the metro area still ranked 32nd worst out of 227 areas across the country for ozone. (Lung.org/sota)

Allegheny County is designated as a “nonattainment” area for fine particulates (PM 2.5) and Sulfur Dioxide, meaning it is out of compliance with the Clean Air Act, even before this most recent incident in Clairton.

Allegheny County, designated as nonattainment for the 2012 PM_{2.5} NAAQS, (with an effective date of April 15, 2015) was required to submit a Moderate area attainment plan to EPA no later than October 15, 2016. ACHD has still not met this deadline despite it being two years past the due date.

Allegheny County has ended up on a what can be described as a rogue list that was published in the Federal Register on April 6, 2018 entitled, “Findings of Failure To Submit State Implementation Plan Submissions for the 2012 Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)” (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/04/06/2018-06989/findings-of-failure-to-submit-state-implementation-plan-submissions-for-the-2012-fine-particulate>).

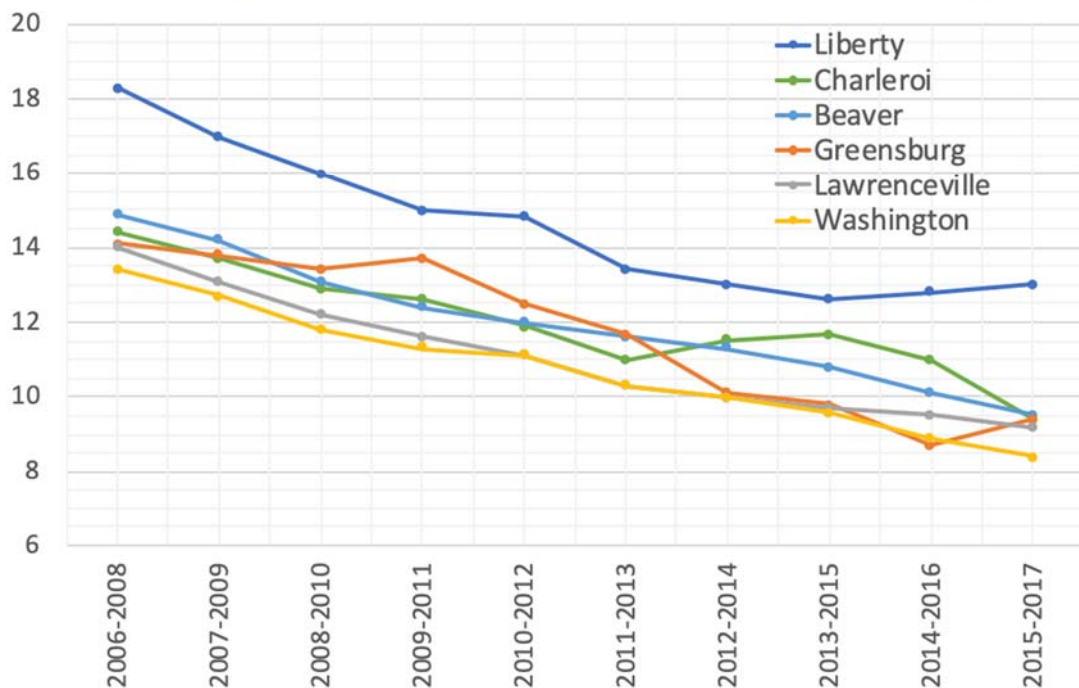
In 2017 (the latest qualified data), the air quality in Allegheny County was considered NOT GOOD for 203 days (more than 55% of the time). This builds off of the 189 NOT GOOD air days in 2016.

Based on an annual average for PM 2.5 spanning 2015 – 2017, eight of the 10 Pittsburgh regional monitors had PM 2.5 levels in the worst 20% ranking of the nation’s 775 monitors. Three of these ten monitors, such as the Liberty Monitor near Clairton, were in the worst 10% nationally.

For 2015 -2017, four of the Pittsburgh region’s 11 ozone monitors ranked in the worst 30% of the nation’s 1135 monitors (<https://breatheproject.org/resources/air-pollution-sources/>).

The Liberty monitor, the monitor in closest proximity to the Coke Works, has been showing increases in annual PM 2.5 emissions for the past several years, most likely explained by degraded compliance by the Coke Works. This negative trend has occurred despite improvements in air quality upwind from other states and elsewhere in Allegheny County. See Figure 1.

Temporal Trends (PM2.5 Annual)



Source: CATF 2018

Figure 1: Temporal Trends of PM 2.5 Annual Average (3-year) for regional monitors with data since 2006. Note the contrast in performance of the Liberty monitor, closest to the Clairton Coke Works, which appears to be getting worse over time, as compared with other regional monitors, which reflect the cleaning up of mostly coal-fired powerplants and industrial facilities. Source: Clean Air Task Force 2018.

US Steel Clairton Coke Works: A History of Air Pollution Issues

Clairton Coke Works has been causing air pollution problems for a long period of time:

In a citizen's 60-day notice to sue Clairton in 2016, Penn Future documented that Clairton Coke Works had over 6,700 air pollution violations between January 1, 2012 and May 31, 2015. That's an average of polluting over five times a day, every day for nearly three and a half years (<https://www.post-gazette.com/local/south/2016/01/29/PennFuture-intends-to-sue-U-S-Steel-Corp-for-air-pollution-violations/stories/201601290106>).

In June of 2018, ACHD issued an enforcement order and a fine of more than \$1 million to U.S. Steel due to a decrease in compliance over time at its Clairton Coke Works facility. Part of this order also specifies a sanction of "hot idle" if violations continue to occur through two subsequent quarters in 2019 (https://www.alleghenycounty.us/uploadedFiles/Allegheny_Home/Health_Department/Programs/Air_Quality/ACHD-USSteel-Enforcement-Order-062818.pdf).

ACHD issued an additional civil penalty against U.S. Steel, a fine of more than \$600,000 in October of 2018, for continued emissions problems for the second quarter of 2018 at the Clairton Coke Works facility (<https://www.post-gazette.com/news/health/2018/10/18/Clairton-Coke-Works-fined-another-620K-emissions-problems-Allegheny-County-health-department/stories/201810180104>).

The Clairton Coke Works is in Penn Environment's "Toxic Ten" report, based on the EPA's Toxic Release Inventory Data (<http://toxicten.org>).

Pollution from the Clairton Coke Works affects a large number of people, particularly a large number of low income, elderly, and African American people. According to environmental justice statistics from the US EPA's EJ Screen tool (<https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>):

- Approximately 130,000 people live within a 5-mile radius of the Clairton Coke Works property (5 mile Ring Centered at 40.318643,-79.897805)
- People in this area have air that is worse than 91 percent of the entire country for particulate matter
- 1/3 of the people living in this area have low income
- 36 percent of people in this area are minority population, primarily African American
- 1/5 of the people living in this area are older than 64 years old

Community Experience US Steel Clairton Coke Works Explosion

The first moment that the Breathe Project learned about the Clairton Coke Works Christmas Eve event was in the middle of an Allegheny County Board of Health meeting on January 9, 2019. Deputy Director for Environmental Health Jim Kelly described a fire at the plant, followed by county air quality emissions violations of the 1-hour Sulfur Dioxide standard of 75 ppb on the following dates: December 26 and 28, 2018 and January 3, 4, and two violations on January 8, 2019. The December 28 date had a sulfur dioxide spike that was nearly double the level that triggers a violation of the standard (<http://pacoovevens.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/6.-ACHD-Second-Press-Release.pdf>).

My observations of what the Board was concerned about was whether US Steel was being cooperative. Nobody at ACHD or the Board of Health asked whether the residents of Clairton, the Mon Valley, or Allegheny County were OK, despite the multiple SO2 exceedances. Nobody asked

when the problem would be solved. Just whether the polluting firm, US Steel, was being “cooperative.”

It was at this same time that ACHD issued its health alert, stating “Mon Valley residents, particularly those with existing respiratory and/or cardiovascular conditions, children and the elderly, are being encouraged to limit outdoor activities until further notice.”

It was 5 days later, on January 14, 2019, that Dr. Gentile visited Clairton students as part of her regular schedule of school visits and reported her findings of significant decreases in lung function.

During that period following January 9, 2019, there were many questions about what happened. There still remain several questions that we have about this situation:

- What were the reasons that it took over two weeks to report this incident and communicate that the Clairton Coke Works was operating without pollution control equipment to remove sulfur from coke gas emissions?
- Was the Allegheny County Fire Marshall ever called to investigate this incident, which was much more than a mere fire?
- What are the reasons that we are all relying upon a contractor that US Steel hired to investigate this incident rather than an independent party or government entity?
- What was the cause of the incident in the first place?
- What are the reasons that residents of Allegheny County are subjected to an order to limit outdoor activity while US Steel continues to produce coke in a facility without pollution control equipment that is REQUIRED by the Clairton Coke Work’s Title V permit?
- What are the justifications for allowing conditions to persist that have resulted in air pollution warnings being issued about 25 percent of the days in 2019?
- What other businesses are permitted to harm people’s health for months at a time without a clear plan for preventing those harms?

ACHD has been issuing “Allegheny Alerts” daily, tracking whether or not “SO₂ Exceedances” have occurred. It needs to be pointed out that SO₂ exceedances are not markers of whether US Steel is somehow conforming to standards of the Clean Air Act. These announcements do not address violations of particulate matter standards.

Any such exceedance actually means that ALLEGHENY COUNTY and the State of Pennsylvania is out of compliance with the Clean Air Act for Sulfur Dioxide (or any other criteria pollutant)—not US Steel. The SO₂ exceedances that did occur mean that our regional government is not doing its job to protect the health of county residents by meeting federal air quality requirements. That is how the Clean Air Act has been set up to hold states—and in our special case—Allegheny County—accountable to federal air pollution standards. So ACHD’s using SO₂ standards as a metric of performance is the county’s tracking whether or not the County itself is meeting requirements of the law.

The legal mechanism that enables states – and in our case Allegheny County—hold companies and facilities accountable is each facility’s Title V permit. The Title V permit specifies the required conditions and data collection and measurement techniques that ensure a facility is operating at levels so that our county does not exceed federal air quality guidelines.

If you examine the US Steel Clairton Coke Works Title V permit, there is clear language in the permit that requires US Steel to operate a desulfurization unit – specifically to remove sulfur compounds,

such as H₂S and SO₂ from coking gas before it can be used or flared. Specifically, under permit item K. “Desulfurization Plant” on Page 181, item 1c clearly states:

The permittee shall, at all times: [Enforcement Order No. 200, November 18, 1994]

- 1) Properly maintain two Claus Plants at the coke oven gas desulfurization facility. Each Claus Plant shall be capable of independently processing all of the coke oven gas produced by the coke plant at full production.
- 2) Operate one Claus Plant when coke oven gas is being produced.
- 3) Have its second Claus Plant ready for start-up and operation when a breakdown of the first Claus Plant occurs, except when the second Claus Plant is down for repairs, maintenance or modification. All repairs, maintenance and modifications to Claus Plants shall be made as expeditiously as practicable. The second Claus Plant shall start up and be fully operational within 18 hours of each breakdown on the first Claus Plant if the plant production is below 5,000 tons of coke per day at the time of the breakdown, or within 30 minutes of each such breakdown if the production is 5,000 tons of coke per day or greater. (<http://pacokeovens.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2012-03-12-Title-V-Permit-of-U.-S.-Steel-Clairton-Works.pdf>)

In addition, The Title V permit prohibits U.S. Steel from burning coke oven gas where the concentration of sulfur compounds (measured as H₂S, hydrogen sulfide) exceeds certain concentrations:

“The permittee shall not operate, or allow to be operated, any source in such manner that unburned coke oven gas is emitted into the open air. In addition, no person shall flare, mix, or combust coke oven gas, or allow such gas to be flared, mixed, or combusted, unless the concentration of sulfur compounds, measured as hydrogen sulfide, in such gas is less than or equal to the following concentrations: [§2105.21.h]

- 1) For coke batteries designated 13, 14, 15, 20, and B, a concentration of ten (10) grains per hundred dry cubic feet of coke oven gas;
- 2) The standard set forth in V.K.1.j.1) above for coke oven batteries designated 13, 14, 15, 20, and B shall be deemed satisfied for such batteries if the coke oven gas from batteries designated 1, 2, 3, 13, 14, 15, 19, 20 and B and treated by the Clairton Works coke oven gas desulfurization system in existence as of June 24, 1993, has a sulfur compound concentration, measured as H₂S, of no greater than 40 grains per hundred dry standard cubic feet of coke oven gas produced by the Clairton Works, when all sulfur emissions from its Claus Sulfur Recovery Plant and the tail gas cleaning equipment thereon, expressed as equivalent H₂S, are added to the measured H₂S. The concentration of sulfur compounds shall include tail-gas sulfur, measured as hydrogen sulfide, emitted from sulfur removal equipment.”

(Permit condition V.K.1.j., page 184). (<http://pacokeovens.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2012-03-12-Title-V-Permit-of-U.-S.-Steel-Clairton-Works.pdf>)

What all of this means is that the Clairton Coke Works facility is operating outside of its legally required provisions as spelled out in its Title V permit. This means that the plant’s emissions are not really being controlled under required legal specifications. As a result, our County continually flirts

with regional violations of the Clean Air Act, and regional residents are subjected to orders to stay indoors. None of this is reasonable from the perspectives of legal requirements and public health.

What this means is that ACHD, the regulator responsible for holding facilities and companies accountable to legal requirements to protect the regions health and air quality, needs to exercise its authority to protect the health of Mon Valley and Allegheny County residents.

Instead, here is what the community is experiencing:

The flaring of un-desulfurized coke oven gas directly into the atmosphere, as is shown in Figures 2 and 3, a photograph taken on February 2, 2019 for the top of 5th Street in Glassport, looking across the valley towards the US Steel Irvin works. Note that this is a large flare. It consists of 3 burner units. The ground on which these burner units stand is approximately the size of a football field. Field reports indicate that the flare sounds like a jet engine running continuously.



Figure 2: View of flare of un-desulfurized coking gas from Glassport, PA



Figure 3: Close up of view of flare of un-desulfurized coking gas from Glassport, PA

The past week has resulted in very high number of very bad smells as recorded by the crowdsourced Smell Pittsburgh reports (Figures 4 – 6):

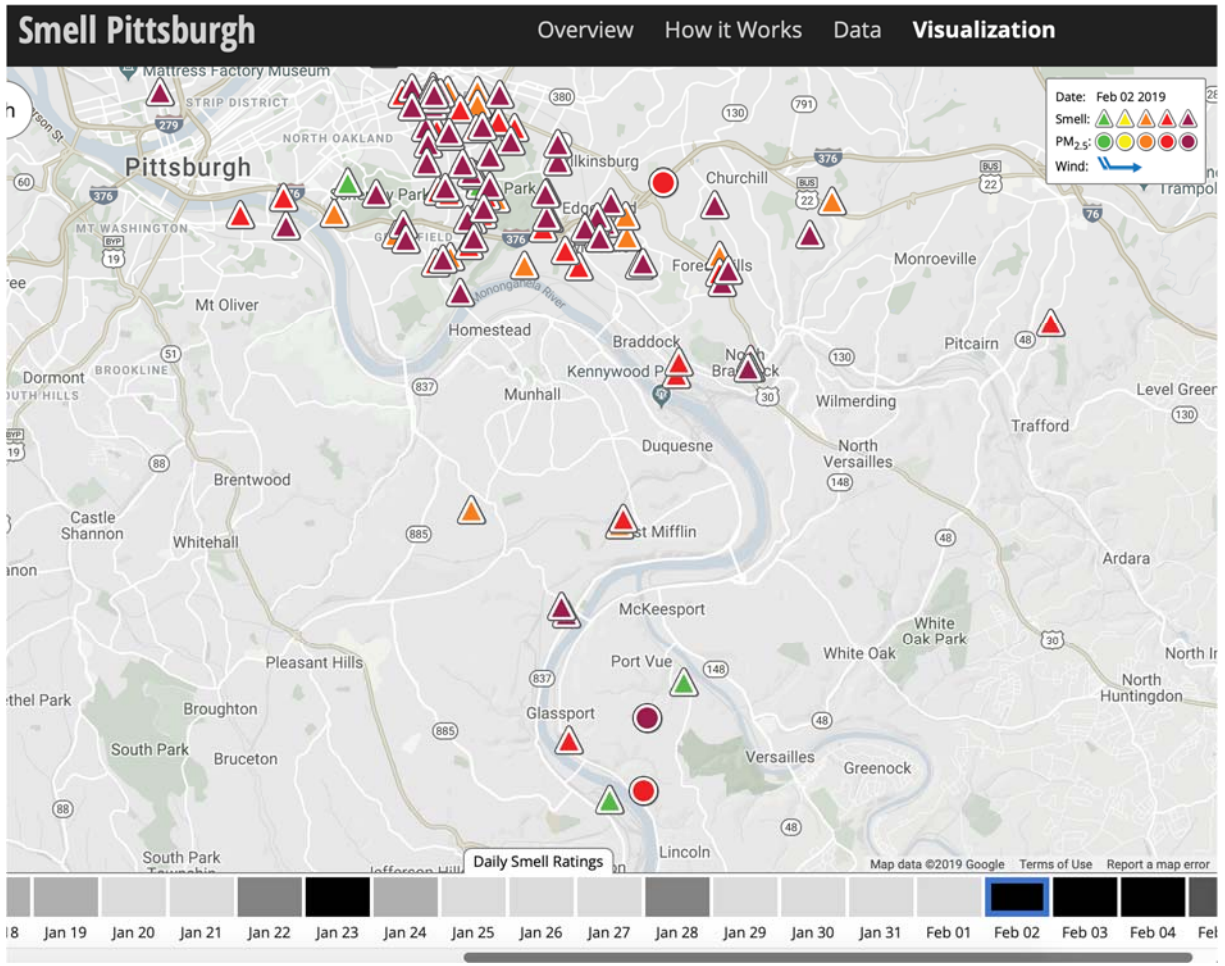


Figure 4: Smell PGH reports for Feb. 2, 2019

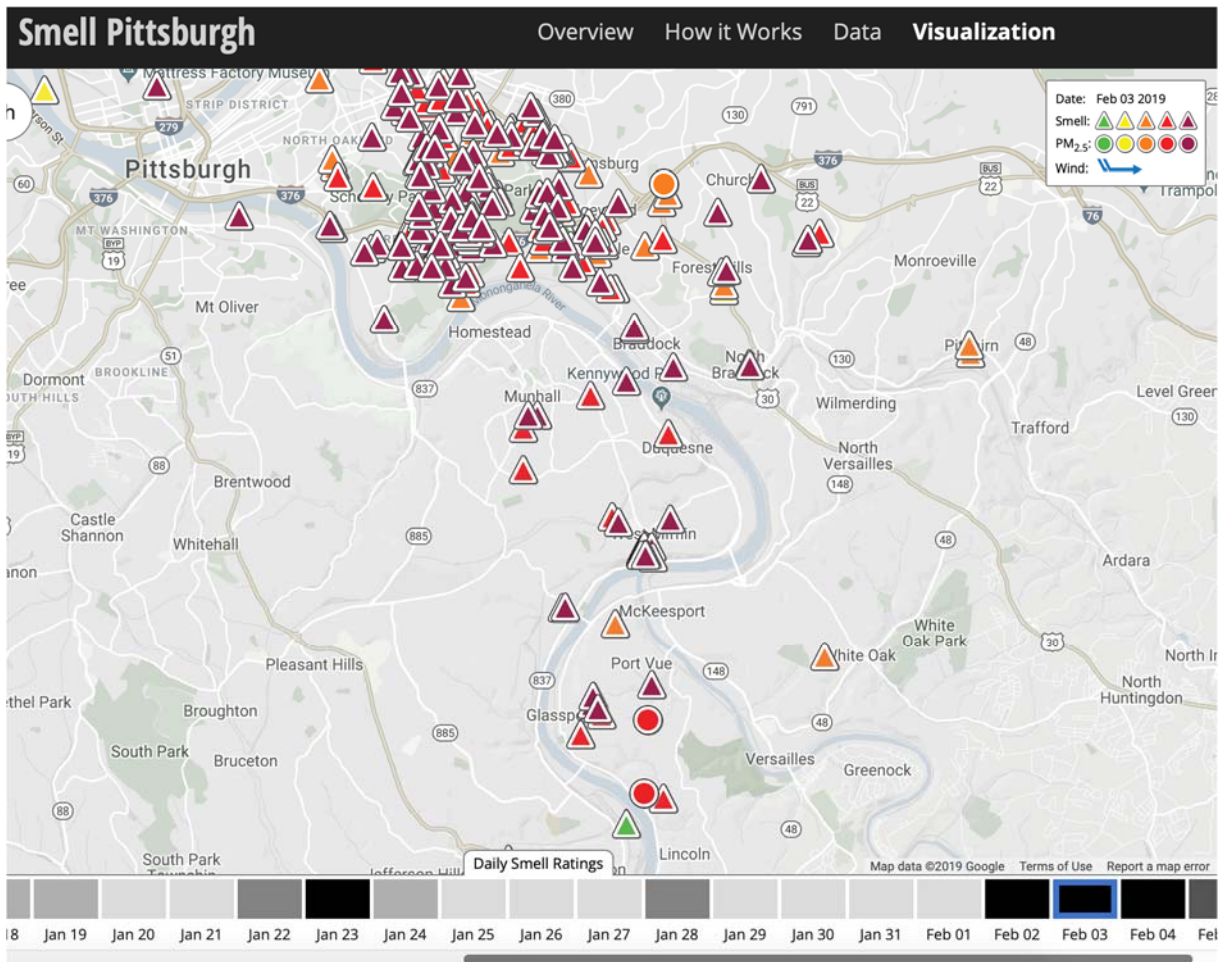


Figure 5: Smell PGH reports for Feb. 3, 2019

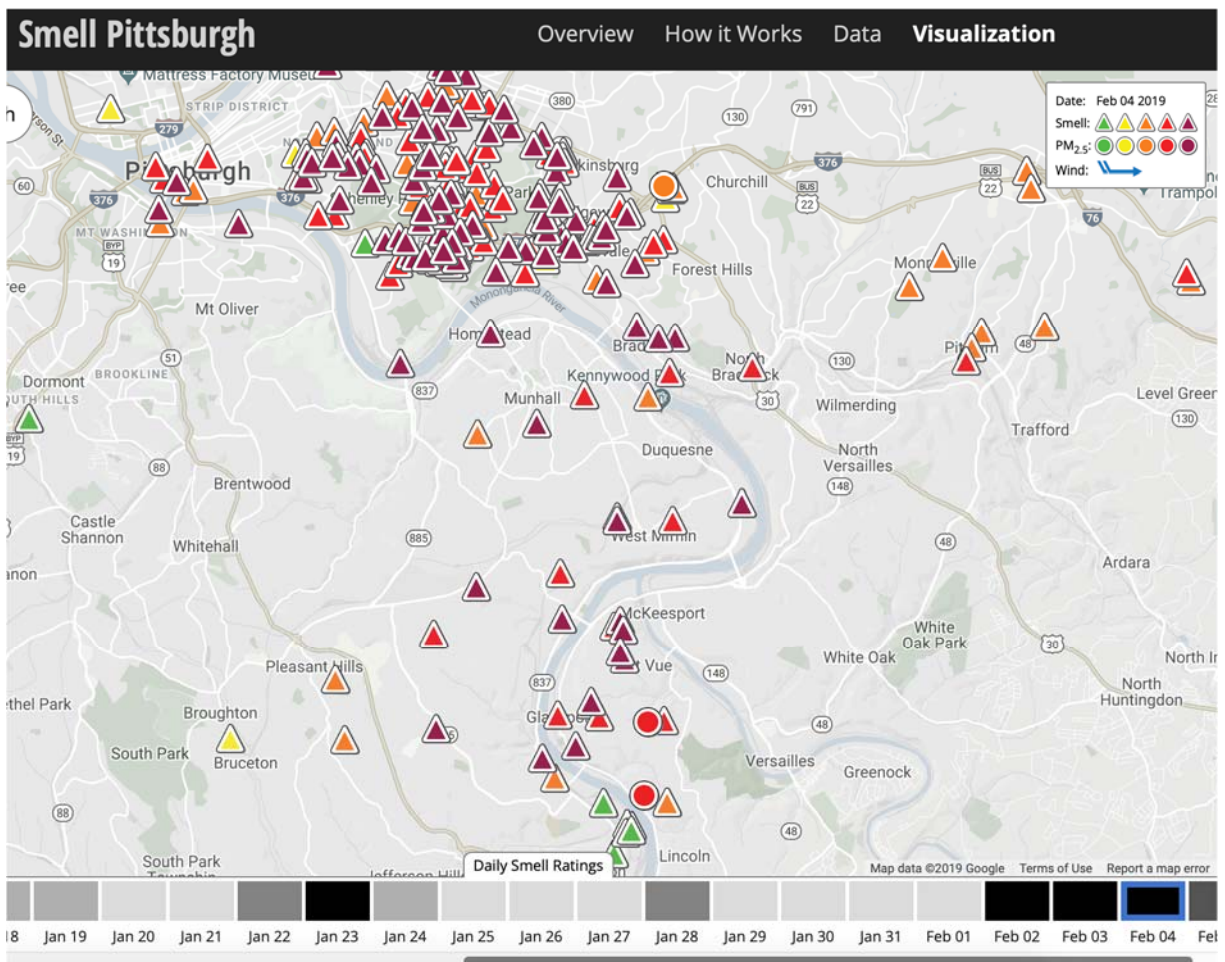


Figure 5: Smell PGH reports for Feb. 2, 2019

There was an additional SO₂ 1-hour exceedance on February 4, 2019. The Health Department issued a statement that foregrounded weather as the explanation for these high readings.

Let us be clear: The weather does not create pollution. Uncontrolled facilities that generate pollution are the source of the pollution that gets amplified under certain weather conditions.

Let us also be clear: The wind is not a control strategy for pollution and protecting public health.

Let us once again be clear: This unacceptable situation is what is proposed as the “solution” going forward at least until May of 2019, at which time US Steel has stated that 70% of the repairs will be completed at the Clairton Coke Works.

I’m not even sure what 70% means in this context. 70% of what? How is that a measure of assurance to a public that is receiving daily messages that air pollution events that could produce exceedances of federal air quality standards?

What Mon Valley Residents and Others in Allegheny County Are Calling For:

- An independent investigation of what caused the fire and explosion at the plant.
- Absent any reasonable control strategy that actually complies with the plant's Title V permit, ACHD should order the Coke Works to implement a hot idle situation.
- ACHD needs to stop treating the situation like an episodic pollution event resulting in isolated emissions violations rather than the systematic situation, that results in continuous emissions in Sulfur Dioxide pollution without an acceptable, specified health-protective plan or endpoint.
- ACHD spelled out in its enforcement action in June 2018 that if the Clairton Coke Works cannot control its emissions, it would specify that that the plant should be put on hot idle. ACHD's timeline was based on 2 subsequent quarters of non-compliant emissions in 2019. That was before the current situation in which major pollution control equipment is not operating. The risks to public health under the current situation call for ACHD to put batteries in hot idle until pollution control equipment can be brought back online.
- Hot idle is not the same as "shutting the plant down." It means that coal is not being baked to generate coking gas. It does not mean damaging ovens by forcing them to cool.
- At a minimum, the most polluting batteries should be put on hot idle. It is unacceptable for the pollution to continue unabated. The plant must curtail operations as much as possible, only to resume once assurance can be made that the public's health is not being compromised.
- Such an action falls in line with air quality regulators have done in other states to protect the health of the public. Just this past July 2018, New York state regulators ordered the Tonawanda Coke plant in Buffalo, New York to shut down operations after a state Department of Environmental Conservation inspection of the facility found persistent and repeated violations of the plant's permit. The order was based on a state inspection of the coke plant that followed numerous complaints from residents who live near the facility in the Town of Tonawanda. (During the inspection, the state found several violations of environmental regulations it described as persistent and ongoing. (<https://buffalonews.com/2018/07/20/state-orders-tonawanda-coke-shut-down-after-inspection-finds-persistent-violations/>)).
- US Steel can afford to fix these problems:
 - US Steel posted full-year 2018 net earnings of \$1,115 million, or \$6.25 per diluted share
 - A full-year 2018 adjusted EBITDA of \$1.76 billion
 - Returned over \$110 million of capital to stockholders in 2018, including \$75 million of share repurchases (<https://globenewswire.com/news-release/2019/01/30/1707955/0/en/United-States-Steel-Corporation-Reports-Fourth-Quarter-and-Full-Year-2018-Results.html>)
 - Details (3rd Quarter 2018) shows that US Steel's Flat Rolled products division, which includes coking operations, pulled in \$2.7 Billion revenue for the company, the sixth

quarter in a row for which the company made more than \$2 Billion per quarter in that operational segment.

- The Flat Rolled Products Division produced \$305 million in 3rd Quarter earnings in 2018 before income and taxes (EBIT). This builds upon \$257 million in EBIT in the first half of 2018 as well as \$386 million in EBIT in 2017 (<https://globenewswire.com/news-release/2018/11/01/1641688/0/en/United-States-Steel-Corporation-Reports-Third-Quarter-2018-Results.html>).

None of these remedies address the ultimate issue: we need to address the rapid transition from fossil fuel-based sources within the next decade. The flaring of un-desulfurized coking gas in the atmosphere is not only a pollution problem from the perspective of public health and the community in the immediate term. It is a problem for future generations for the climate change pollution that the plant generates. We must find less impactful ways to meet the needs of our society without creating the damage that comes from operating a plant in the way that the Clairton Coke Works operates. I believe that innovation and creativity should become the bedrock of our regional economy, not 19th Century production and pollution control band-aids.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Matthew M. Mehalik, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Breathe Project



Ashleigh Deemer
Western Pennsylvania Director, PennEnvironment
1831 Murray Avenue, Ste 216
Pittsburgh, PA 15217
Phone: 724-316-5853

Good afternoon. My name is Ashleigh Deemer and I am the Western Pennsylvania Director for PennEnvironment. I'd first like to thank the House and Senate Democratic Policy Committees for holding this important hearing on addressing pollution and public health in the wake of the Clairton Coke Works' fire in December. And I'd especially like to thank Representative Austin Davis for hosting today's hearing here in his district, Senator Boscola and Representative Sturla for Chairing this meeting, Senator Brewster, and my own senator, the Honorable Jay Costa for his leadership.

As I'm sure you know, PennEnvironment is a statewide, citizen-based non-profit environmental advocacy group. We work to protect the places we love, advance the environmental values we share, and we win real results for our environment on behalf of the more than 150,000 PennEnvironment contributing members, volunteers, and online activists.

There's no better example of this than our work on tackling air pollution and protecting public health in Allegheny County. Here in Pittsburgh, PennEnvironment works alongside an incredible coalition of organizations and individuals to improve air quality in the region and protect the health of the county's residents. As we all continue this work, people in Allegheny County are more aware than ever about the health impacts of air pollution. And without question, these residents want cleaner air. In the last six months, thousands of Allegheny County residents have signed petitions calling for strong polluter enforcement, people are rallying, and each week our news outlets are flooded with stories of pollution, health impacts, national rankings, and letters from residents seeking change.

The December 24th fire at the Clairton Coke Works, and the resulting impacts on the community, have only amplified those concerns. Since the fire, there have been multiple exceedances of federal air quality standards, noticeable and objective increases in pollution, and the plant continues to operate in violation of its Clean Air Act permits.

There is no doubt the impacts of this fire are serious and ongoing, but this incident is also shining a light on pollution and health impacts that were evident at this facility for years before the fire occurred.

For example, PennEnvironment's 2018 Toxic Ten report analyzed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Toxic Release Inventory, which contains pollution data reported by companies themselves. The report found that the Clairton Coke Works is one of the most toxic

industrial facilities in Allegheny County. Their normal operations, before the fire, exposed the 37,000 people who live within 3 miles of the plant to a cocktail of dangerous compounds, including benzene, styrene, lead, mercury, cyanide compounds and more.¹

More broadly, PennEnvironment's 2018 report entitled "Trouble in the Air" found that the Pittsburgh metropolitan area had elevated particulate pollution and/or smog that made it unhealthy to breathe 1 out of every 3 days in Allegheny County in 2016.² It is fair to say that the Clairton Coke Works, which releases over a million pounds of particulates per year and is the third largest polluter in Pennsylvania, is a major contributor to this problem.

Consider Dr. Gentile's important work with elementary school students in the region: this research has revealed that Allegheny County has a baseline asthma epidemic, with 22% of kids suffering from the disease. The statewide average in Pennsylvania is 10% and the national average is 8%. After the fire, 36% of kids with asthma in Clairton have "significantly reduced lung function" while kids in other communities, not in the shadow of the Clairton Works, remained stable.^{3 4} Those are the numbers, but it's important, too, to connect with the *people* and the effects of asthma on their health, their education, and their families. Local resident Colette Williams was quoted in the Post-Gazette about her son, saying "He couldn't breathe, he was tired and wasn't able to come out of the house because of the air quality."⁵ We should not expect families to sustain this kind of burden and trauma, and we cannot expect kids to learn, grow, and flourish when they are confined to their homes, unable to breathe.

Given all of this, it's unacceptable that U.S. Steel continues to run the facility without required pollution controls and in total violation of their Clean Air Act permits. That shouldn't be an option that's on the table, acceptable, or allowed. PennEnvironment takes a solutions view of every problem we encounter, and we recommend the following:

1. **U.S. Steel must put the Clairton Coke Works in hot idle until the required pollution controls are restored.** You will hear U.S. Steel say their hands are tied, but this is untrue. U.S. Steel's profits conservatively totaled \$1.85 billion in 2018.⁶ They can certainly afford to put the necessary and *required* pollution controls in place before resuming production.
2. **U.S. Steel should be transparent** and communicate the findings of their investigation about how this fire happened, as well as preventative measures the company will take to protect the community and prevent similar incidents in the future.

¹<http://toxicten.org/us-steel-clairton>

²<https://pennenvironment.org/reports/pae/trouble-air>

³<https://www.ehn.org/pittsburgh-elementary-school-students-saw-increased-asthma-flare-ups-following-the-clairton-coke-works-fire-2626003196.html>

⁴ <https://www.post-gazette.com/local/2019/01/15/Bad-air-may-trigger-Clairton-asthmas/stories/201901150167>

⁵<https://www.post-gazette.com/news/environment/2019/01/23/Passions-still-hot-in-aftermath-of-coke-works-fire/stories/201901230158>

⁶ <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/us-steel-tanks-9-as-earnings-boost-fades-2018-08-02>

3. **The Allegheny County Health Department should continue their stringent enforcement of the plant beyond the impacts of the fire.** In 2018, the Health Department took unprecedented action to hold U.S. Steel accountable for their chronic illegal pollution. This should continue throughout and beyond the mitigation of this fire.
4. **The Allegheny County Health Department should apply rigorous requirements to U.S. Steel's mitigation plan** to ensure that the work to restore the required pollution controls happens as quickly and thoroughly as possible, and to prevent exceedances of pollution limits and health impacts in the interim.

All the evidence presented here today tells us that the implementation of these solutions would dramatically reduce the pollution burden on local residents and our region, ensuring us all a cleaner and truly livable future.

Again, I'd like to thank state Rep. Austin Davis for inviting us to speak today and holding this important hearing for his constituents, and the members of the House and Senate Democratic Policy Committees for affording me the opportunity to testify today. PennEnvironment looks forward to working with the members of the General Assembly, Allegheny County, the Allegheny County Health Department, and other decision makers to ensure the public has access to all the facts and necessary information, and that US Steel takes the steps needed to remedy this public health threat as quickly as possible. You all have a paper copy of my testimony with my contact information. Thank you.



**Statement by County Executive Rich Fitzgerald to the
Joint Senate and House Democratic Policy Committee**

Chair Boscola, Chair Sturla, and members of the Joint Senate and House Democratic Policy Committee, welcome to Allegheny County. I'm sorry that I'm unable to join you this afternoon. In my stead, Jennifer Liptak, my Chief of Staff, is in attendance to hear from you and the testifiers on this important issue.

While we have seen improvements in air quality in this region, we also know that it's not enough. The Health Department's increased monitoring, scrutiny and enforcement of the various industries in our county will continue. It is imperative that we hold the industry accountable for violations of the environmental protections guaranteed to us.

Dr. Hacker is the strongest advocate for air quality and health that this county has ever had. I commend the work that she and her team are continuing to do on behalf of the county's residents. I also thank the Board of Health for the time and talents that they have dedicated to the issue of air quality, on a voluntary basis, as they balance that demand with other pressing county health needs. It is not an easy job.

We all want clean air. Air quality enforcement, however, is a complex issue. As just one example, actions and efforts taken by the Health Department are not done in a vacuum. Instead, as the EPA's delegate for the federal Clean Air Act, and the DEP's delegate for the Pennsylvania Clean Air Act, all enforcement is done in collaboration with federal and state agencies. Even with that oversight, Dr. Hacker and her team have ramped up their efforts significantly in the past few years.

ACHD is pushing the envelope on enforcement and other actions related to air quality. ACHD has partnered with the EPA to issue Notice of Violations. Under a new civil penalty policy, U.S. Steel has been fined over \$2 million for violations. ACHD has continued to meet with advocates, community groups, elected officials and others to find additional ways to address air quality. ACHD has magnified its communication and outreach efforts. ACHD continues to provide reliable information on air quality in a timely manner.

As County Executive, I will continue to work with County Council to provide the county budgetary resources we can to support the department in these efforts. Most recently, that has meant providing funding for staffing which has allowed ACHD to increase its legal team and add additional air quality inspectors. I will also continue to work with our partners in local, state and federal government as we look to you to provide ACHD with additional tools and resources to help us continue to improve air quality in this region. I am hopeful that today's conversation is a significant step in that direction.

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE



Statement of Allegheny County Controller Chelsa Wagner
Presented by Felicia Williams
Democratic Policy Hearing, Clairton, Pa.
February 7, 2019

Controller Wagner is unable to attend the hearing today as she had a previous commitment regarding the UPMC/Highmark issue that is likewise a massive public health concern for residents, but is appreciative of the opportunity to present these remarks:

As the elected fiscal watchdog for the taxpayers of Allegheny County for the past eight years, my office has focused considerably on how Allegheny County carries out its responsibilities regarding public health, one of the core responsibilities of Allegheny County government. Unfortunately, as our audits and reports have demonstrated, too often County leadership has failed to prioritize and fulfill its responsibilities regarding public health. The failure of county government we are discussing today is not a surprise. It is a pattern that my office has documented.

Case in point: our 2016 audit of the Department's Air Quality function revealed that the County Health Department, until it corrected its actions following our audit, engaged in a practice of negotiating settlements with the biggest polluters instead of taking seriously its regulatory role as the entity charged with enforcing our air quality standards. That audit spurred corrective actions, and since, the County has levied fines and conditions on pollution sources such as the Clairton Coke Works—the actions the County points to in claiming that it has prioritized public health. This was not a priority until our audits brought their complacency to the light of day and forced action. Likewise, when the City of Pittsburgh faced a lead crisis that continues today, one that is no less dangerous than what occurred in Flint, Mich., the County Health Department assumed a passive position, failing to notify residents of the dangers and even publishing misleading information, as documented in our audit.

So what occurred on Christmas Eve and the 16 days following was not a surprise, but part of an unfortunate pattern, with Allegheny County demonstrating again that the health of County residents was not its priority. **Allegheny County failed to do the bare minimum—to simply notify residents and workers of the increased risk. The failure to provide this notification was a failure of the most basic responsibilities of County government. However unfortunate, this failure could have been predicted.**

It is no coincidence that the Clean Air Fund derived from the very fines being cited today as evidence of "action," is being gutted to the tune of \$5 million to rebuild office space—funds that should be invested directly in these communities to remediate the harm we are discussing today. This is the pattern of blatant disregard for public health and squandering of public resources that led to the issues we are discussing here today.

Until the leadership of this County understands what the rest of the world outside understands—that responsible governance requires the principles of ESG: environmental, social and governance—we will never thrive, and our residents will continue to suffer the consequences. Make no mistake; what is good for our residents is the same thing that is good for job creation. We must stop peddling this false narrative of the past that having industry and jobs requires that we poison our residents.

Our region is recognized historically because the leadership of the past understood this was not a binary decision of “either/or.” We must remember that David Lawrence took on public opinion to essentially eliminate coal furnaces in Pittsburgh, and that the very principles upon which the Allegheny Conference was founded was that we as a region could lead in a way that was good for public health and good for industry. Yet, sadly, this region seems to have lost its way. Our leadership continues to claim Pittsburgh will uphold the Paris climate accord as the very residents who labor to live and work here cannot breathe the air nor drink the water.

Every worker in the Coke Works breathes the air. So do many of their children and parents. And every resident of the communities which have been afflicted with poisoned air for the past six weeks wants good jobs in their communities. All of these residents demand protection from their government from clear and present threats as we strive for both good jobs and clean air. Our efforts toward both cannot consist merely of lofty rhetoric.

In conclusion, we cannot allow the failure of the basic duty of notification in the wake of the Clairton Works fire to be repeated, and we must take notice that Allegheny County’s pattern of failure to inform and to regulate caused this unnecessary public health event that could have been prevented through common sense and through transparency.

Controller Wagner and our office remain committed to ensuring that our residents are protected and that County government is fulfilling its duties to the people—especially in this age where environmental protections are relinquished at the federal level, requiring far more vigilance locally. We must demonstrate that we can walk and chew gum at the same time: that we can in fact ensure that our residents breathe safely while we also protect the livelihood of our families. To expect anything less is the greatest failure of our government.

**Senate and House Democratic Policy Committees
Thursday, February 7, 2019**

**Testimony of:
Rachel Gleason, Executive Director
Pennsylvania Coal Alliance**

The Pennsylvania Coal Alliance is the principal trade organization representing underground and surface bituminous coal operators in Pennsylvania, as well as other associated companies whose businesses rely on coal mining and a strong coal economy. Nationally, Pennsylvania is the third largest coal producing state, and PCA member companies produce 90 percent of the bituminous coal mined annually in Pennsylvania, which totaled over 47 million tons in 2017¹.

Bituminous coal mining helps drive Pennsylvania's economy, supporting over 30,000 direct, indirect, and induced jobs, while contributing \$4 billion annually to the state's economy². The Pennsylvania coal industry creates this economic value in communities across Pennsylvania, with active mining operations in fifteen counties³ and multiple company locations in more than half of Pennsylvania's counties. The industry accounts for 25 percent of the employment in some regions of the state, up to 40 percent of the local tax base, and often serves as a community's financial cornerstone for economic development⁴.

Northeast and east of Pittsburgh are some of the most productive metallurgical coal mines in the United States. A type of bituminous coal, metallurgical coal is vital in the steel making process because it can be baked into a pure form of carbon called coke. The coke is used to smelt iron, and the higher the quality of coke, the higher the quality of steel. These Pennsylvania's coal mines extract incredibly valuable high and mid volatile coal from the

¹ <https://www.eia.gov/coal/>

² https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/203afb_fdd3aada0fd94deb80441c19d729196b.pdf

³ <https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Land/Mining/BureauofMiningPrograms/Reports/Pages/2017-Coal-and-Industrial-Minerals-Mining-Activities.aspx>

⁴ https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/203afb_fdd3aada0fd94deb80441c19d729196b.pdf

Freeport and Kittanning coal seams, and a large portion of that coal is sent to US Steel's Mon Valley Works.

Over thirty Pennsylvania Coal Alliance member companies, representing thousands of Pennsylvania jobs, work with both our state's coal industry and US Steel's Mon Valley Works. These companies transport the coal to the Mon Valley Works via rail, truck and barge; supply equipment and parts that supports both the mines and the Mon Valley Works production facilities; and provide solutions to ensure state and federal regulatory compliance.

The Pennsylvania coal that makes the steel at the Mon Valley Works delivers the goods and services that our society needs – healthcare, telecommunications, improved agricultural practices, better transport networks, clean water, and access to reliable and affordable energy. Hot rolled steel makes pipes and storage tanks; cold rolled steel makes office furniture and refrigerators and plumbing fixtures; galvanized steel makes HVAC units and sinks and cars; ferritic stainless steel makes restaurant equipment and hot water tanks; martensitic stainless steel makes scissors and knife blades and jet engine parts. Beyond the thousands of jobs that support Pennsylvania's mines and the Mon Valley Works, U.S manufacturing represents 12 percent of the GDP⁵, and many of these coal-produced steel products go to companies like GM, Ford and Whirlpool, which are integral to the manufacturing industry.

In closing, I would remind the Committees of the role coal and steel play in our everyday lives. We often fail to realize the role that both have in infrastructure and manufacturing, and many of the consumer products that we touch every day. Coal and steel are vital resource to a healthy economy and the future of Pennsylvania.

⁵ <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/08/03/job-gains-for-the-manufacturing-industry-are-the-most-since-1995.html>

TO:

The Honorable Lisa M. Boscola

The Honorable Jim Brewster

The Honorable Austin Davis

The Honorable Mike Sturla

In re: Joint Democratic Policy Committee Hearing on Improving Air Quality

February 6, 2019

Dear Madam and Sirs,

Thank you very much for your time, and your attention to the air quality problems that face our region.

Our group is called LCAN (Lawrenceville Clean Air Now). We are a new and growing group of concerned citizens from the Lawrenceville neighborhood of Pittsburgh. We are deeply concerned with the health of our children and our most vulnerable neighbors.

We are imploring you to help keep corporations like US Steel and the Allegheny County government accountable to air quality regulations and fully transparent in their operations. Industries should not be allowed to flagrantly pollute the air we breathe, nor should government be allowed to excuse excedent emissions by saying it's an 'inversion day' due to the region's weather conditions or topography. Clean air is a human right, regardless of who profits from pollution and the geographic terrain.

Allegheny County residents at a high risk for cancer. According to the American Lung Association's 2018 "State of the Air" report with data from 2014-16, Allegheny County was in the top 2 percent of counties for the risk of cancer from air toxins. The Pittsburgh metropolitan region, which includes parts of western Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio, ranked 10th worst out of the 201 studied, receiving an air quality grade of F. Clairton Coke Works has been determined to be a main contributor to this poor rating.

Allegheny County Government has a responsibility to regulate corporations like US Steel. Pittsburgh shares an airshed with Clairton. As Pittsburgh residents, Clairton Coke Works operations directly affect our health. Similarly, our civic health is affected by how well the Allegheny County Health Department regulates the coke works' pollution. For years, they have failed to adequately do so, and our confidence in county government's willingness and ability to protect public health has suffered as a result.

The recent fire and the Health Department's ongoing failure to quickly, transparently, and widely disseminate their plan for a clear and complete response has left us with grave concerns about our Health Department's ability to adequately protect the public health in crisis situations. Its

reluctance to propose or discuss options for shuttering the plant, running the ovens on a hot idle, or some other pollution mitigation measure has left us with the perception that it prioritizes the financial well-being of U.S. Steel above the public health of Allegheny County residents.

County Executive Fitzgerald did not respond in a timely manner, our faith in the system has been shaken. County Exec. Fitzgerald has yet to make any statement on the fire and his office has been referring all citizen phone calls regarding the fire to the Health Department. This seems a clear abdication of responsibility. We rely on our elected officials to protect the health of our children, seniors, those with chronic conditions, low-income households, and other vulnerable people. Our faith that county officials would prioritize this responsibility in the face of an urgent, large-scale threat has been severely shaken.

We ask for an investigation into the US Steel fire and the county government's response. We urge you to thoroughly investigate the county's response to the fire and to please determine what more they could and should be doing to protect the health of all Allegheny County residents from the fire's impact on pollution controls at the facility. If it turns out your investigation finds no fault and no other course of action needed, you will still have done your constituents and their neighbors the great service of restoring their faith in county government. And if you do find fault and needed action, you may very well be saving lives.

We need your help to keep corporations and the county government accountable. Thank you again for your concerted effort to hold corporations like US Steel, and the Allegheny County government accountable to air quality regulations. We need your help to transform this region into one that's livable for all.

Sincerely,

Members, **Lawrenceville Clean Air Now:**

Dominick and Gretchen Anselmo

Christine Brill

Emily and Lars Cleath

Jenna Date

Molly Dimond

Mark Dowiak

Jonathan Kline

Jessica Setzler

Public Comments Submitted into the 2/7/19 Joint Hearing's Official Record

I have lived in Pittsburgh my whole life. I grew up hearing stories from my grandpa who worked downtown back in the day. These were stories about how bad the air quality in Pittsburgh used to be, about how he needed to take a change of clothes to work with him because his clean white shirts got filthy on his way to work downtown. I thought those were stories of the past and that that Pittsburgh and the state of Pennsylvania cared about regulating industry to benefit the safety of workers and the surrounding communities. But tonight, on February 3rd 2019 in my Squirrel Hill neighborhood, I cannot go outside or run my air conditioner for fear or the omnipresent stench and burning in my lungs from sulfurous compounds in the air. Never in my lifetime have I seen air quality as bad as this in the city, and so consistently bad for so long. And if it is this bad in the city, I can only imagine how unbearable it must be for my neighbors in the Mon Valley.

Allowing the Clairton coke plant to continue to operate without proper oversight and restrictions has become a public health disaster effecting the entire region and this is a stain on the history of Pittsburgh as a city of the future. I cannot comprehend what has taken so long to organize this hearing or take any action regarding the plant. We know the risks and health hazards. Act now. Shut down the plant until they can meet emission standards that do not endanger the health of the million of surrounding Pennsylvanians.

– Connor Brem

I'm writing to officially register a complaint about the air quality in Allegheny County, which is directly tied to the practices at the Clairton Coke Works (CCW). It is a travesty that economic goals of this CCW are placed above the health of our population. My partner and I moved back to Pittsburgh a year ago to raise our young daughters, but between lead in the water and the absolutely awful air quality we are seriously considering this choice. If Pittsburgh wants to continue to grow and attract the best and the brightest to grow its wider economy, this issue must be addressed. We find ourselves unable to go outside on many a weekend, and can smell the awful reek of the leaky, rancid CCW through our house all day. It is truly awful, and the city and health department owe it to our community to shut this place down and put the health and welfare of our community first. I urge you to listen to the outpouring of community voices raising this issue.

– Dr. Caitlin Forbes Spear, Squirrel Hill Resident

I simply wanted to offer my experience as a Pittsburgh city resident in the neighborhood of Greenfield. I am often woken up in the middle of the night by a horrible stench coming in through my bedroom window. Last night was especially bad. My husband and I care for my 92 year old father and since moving him in with us from Wash DC 3 yrs ago he now has to see a pulmonologist every 4 months and uses an inhaler and I feel like we didn't do him any favors by bringing him to a place with such poor air quality.

– Sad and angry in Greenfield, Carla Pfahler

I read that we could submit comments related to the spikes in sulfur and other pollution coming from the Clairton works. We live in Squirrel Hill and our air quality has been seriously degraded. The smoke is thick enough to see on some days and it smells terribly. I have a young child who is always coughing and I wonder how much is due to this air pollution factor. It is also difficult when we cannot open our windows in summer due to this pollution. It would seem, with a known point source, there would be some way to address this issue and help the many citizens whose health is affected. Thank you for trying to address this issue,

– Annett Sullivan

I am writing to express my deep concern over the recent spike in pollution after the Clairton Coke Works fire, not to mention my overall concern about Pennsylvania as one of the top three polluters in the entire country! I have posted several Speck air quality monitors in my home, and I can clearly see the evidence, as the monitor reads air pollution spikes into danger levels in the middle of the night. I'm assuming that's when the Clairton is most active.

I would like to point out that there are only 1,000 employees at the Clairton plant, while there are more than a million residents significantly and negatively affected by the works. While I understand that Clairton is the largest coke works in the country and the money generated by the repeated fines Clairton Coke Works pays for its pollution are needed in county and state coffers; however, can't we find some political will to finally put a stop to industrial pollution in Southwestern PA? Can't we find a "greener" solution to reach the budget?? The citizens are ready. Are you?

I'm originally from Ohio, and I find the air quality here both shocking and nightmarish. I worry that our foster son will develop asthma, along with the thousands of other children in the area. Why doesn't anyone seem to care about long-term consequences, such as COPD or even death of those who live here? I am a tenured professor with a union job; it would be very hard for me to leave this area, yet I feel constantly stressed by a devil I can't even see most of the time. Although I have no history of thyroid cancer in my family, after living in Pittsburgh for 6 years, I was diagnosed with it. I will never be the same.

Don't you and your family need to breathe, too?? Please DO SOMETHING!

– Aimee-Marie Dorsten, PhD

And Clairton Coke Works should be held accountable for their lack of attention to environmental standards. We get their pollution here in Squirrel Hill, too! This is a public health issue that has been neglected for too long and it's endangering the community. Make them clean up their act!

– Lisa Holman

The Clairton Coke Works should be safely and entirely shut-down until such time, if ever, that it can operate without endangering the health, breathing and life of the citizens, whomever and wherever they may be and fish and wildlife. There is no amount of money that buys the right to harm other's health, which there is no doubt this is doing. No chimney is high enough to make the toxic materials non-toxic. It all ends up somewhere and affects humans, wildlife, air, land and water forever.

The current situation is untenable and perfectly illustrates the disregard and disrespect that the company and the political regulators have for the public. This is going to boil over.

– Charlie Winfree

Article I Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution guarantees "The people have a right to clean air... As trustee of these resources, the Commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the people." However for more than one month, the people of not just Clairton but the Mon Valley and the whole region have suffered from pollution severe enough to cause asthma and other lung conditions.

Unfortunately, the public was not even notified of the incident until weeks later, and there still has not been adequate action to end the pollution of our region. The Coke Works continues to operate, as I understand it because of concerns about the equipment at the facility in the event of a shutdown. I have NOT heard similar concerns about the damage being done to the children of the region every time they take a breath of air. Do we value machines and profits more than the lives of our children?

It is long past due that we enforce our constitutional rights. I expect that the appropriate state agencies will work with the Allegheny County Health Department to take swift action to correct this problem by any means necessary. People must come before profits.

Furthermore, there may be long-term health impacts by these pollutants, and yet health insurance remains unaffordable to many. Aside from the immediate action at Clairton Coke Works, I expect our Pennsylvania general assembly to take action toward a true universal, comprehensive healthcare plan that guarantees every resident is covered at all times, with zero co-pays or deductibles or any other costs at the point of care. Such a comprehensive plan already exists: the Healthcare 4 All PA plan sponsored by Rep DeLissio. I hope that all representatives and senators will co-sponsor the bill and work to move it forward quickly. We owe the residents of Clairton and the region this much, so that they can get proper medical attention for the harm suffered.

Lastly, Allegheny has many sources of pollution beyond Clairton Coke Works, and most of these sources are tied in some way to fossil fuels: coal, oil, and gas. Our health throughout the region will continue to suffer until fossil fuels are removed from general use. I expect the general assembly to also seriously investigate how to best transition our economy away from fossil fuels as quickly as possible, ideally by 2030 so we can also mitigate climate change. The renewable energy field -- solar, wind, geothermal -- is booming worldwide and we would be smart to jump in now for healthier lives, healthier planet, and healthier jobs.

– Garret Wassermann

I wanted to write to you to express my concern and frustration that there is not more vigorous and vociferous opposition to the petrochemical companies that are ruining our environment and failing to comply with emissions regulations. The Clairton fire and the hopelessly inadequate response from ACHD that followed is just the latest example of US Steels disregard for public health and politicians failing to hold them accountable. Since the fire, I have been following ACHD's Facebook updates and I have been shocked to see how evasive they are about what is causing pollution in our county.

Yes, inversions are a meteorological event but they are not the reason there are pollutants in the air. Moreover, inversions are not anomalies but rather common in our region. Why shouldn't we ask US Steel to limit their emissions when inversions are due to occur? It is ridiculous that we as citizens have to either stay indoors or suffer the consequences.

I'm encouraged by the fact that people are starting to take notice and express their opposition to a vision of Pittsburgh as a petrochemical hub. I would like to ask you to help create a different vision for Pittsburgh, one that prioritizes the health of its residents.

– Dr. Tatyana Gershkovich

My name is Melanie Meade, a resident of Clairton, Pa. It was disheartening to find out that we were not properly informed of the December 24th fire and then told we didn't visit the emergency room in enough numbers to alert the ACHD. These meetings force the community to listen to their excuse for the fire and the mishandling of communication with the community. It is unconscionable to think we still have not been welcomed to speak and tell our stories of illness and inconvenience due to a fire caused by industry. Why aren't the families suffering with health issues directly related to poor air quality offered fan filters and other resources to accommodate them during this time of unknowns. We cannot be sure we receive knowledge of when the emissions are high efficiently to allow for effective action for the public health of the people.

If the Mayor and Councilmen/women are not speaking up for our public health how will we ever get the Health Department to uphold its mission to us? How does a part-time Mayor working for the industry avoid speaking up for the public health of the community he's been elected to serve and no one acknowledge more can be done. More should be done.

If our community has received substandard education with poor air quality for so long how should we expect the community to lift itself up and take hold of it's public health issues caused by big industry? Thanks for listening.

– Melanie Meade

I am a Shadyside resident living on Elwood St. in Pittsburgh, PA. My family for years has been impacted by the industrial smell coming from the Clariton Coke Works, but since Christmas it has been constant and unbearable.

This past weekend, we actually rented a hotel in Bedford Springs as a way to get away from the smell. On Friday night it crept in through the drafts and my entire family spent a sick, sleepless night, including my 5 year old. The air outside was worse and there was no relief. The smell and air that rose to our 3rd floor made it uninhabitable by morning.

We have had enough. We are tax payers and my husband has a tenured position at the University. We have begun to investigate what it might mean to live and work elsewhere because of the air pollution here. We insist that you put the plant on hot idle or at a minimum when inversions are


predicted, days in advance of them to minimize risk and impact. Please consider retraining their workers in other needed fields in our area and relocating or shutting down this plant entirely. In the meantime, we urgently ask you for a meeting in Shadyside or the East End with our District Council, the Allegheny Health Department and the decision makers at US Steel and/or the Coke Works.

We will begin to organize our community now and will begin to appear before you repeatedly until something is done. Enough is enough. You are putting the rights and health of the few over the rights of the many and of the future generation. It is utterly unacceptable.

– Christine Graziano

February 6, 2019

David Bertenthal


Pittsburgh, PA 15217

RE: To be submitted into the official record of the Clairton hearing on 02/07/2019

It's no secret that Pittsburgh's air quality has been bad for years, but after the fire it's gotten worse. I know the US Steel Clairton plant had a fire around Christmas which damaged the pollution controls. 20 million in damages according to the Post article by Daniel Moore.

US Steel does not want to put the plant on hot idle to make the repairs. They claim it will cause job cuts, increase pollution and damage their plant. However in 2009 they put their plant on hot idle without apparent damage. The Clairton plant has a history of air pollution problems and has paid fines totaling more than \$4 million under terms of enforcement actions in 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2014 and 2016, (2018 which they are appealing) Fines get paid, but our air quality doesn't improve.

Since the fire there has been an increase in the sulfur in our air, and it's getting into my home. I can smell it when I'm trying to sleep. The evenings and early mornings have been especially bad. I read numerous complaints about the sulfur smell on the SmellPgh app. The app shows each report on the map. I've noticed the closer the proximity to Clairton the more desperate and severe the complaints become. I've spoken to my neighbors who are concerned, angry and confused. I see consistently elevated levels of PM2.5 on the CMU air quality project page www.pghairquality.com their RAMP sensors measure PM2.5 around the city. PM2.5 is linked to heart disease and cancer.

Since the fire our city has been at the whim of the weather, if we have an inversion we all choke on sulfur. I believe it's a public health issue and affects my quality of life. I'm breathing particulates and sulfur in my front yard, on the way to get groceries, and in my bedroom as it invades my personal space. It's upsetting to say the very least, often I find it to be demoralizing.

US Steel earned 1.1 billion in profits in 2018. I believe they have the financial resources to make the necessary changes to properly filter the pollution that can be seen, smelled and measured coming from their Clairton plant. As George Jugovic, Jr., vice president of legal affairs at PennFuture puts it, "U.S. Steel continues to show that 45 years after the enactment of the Clean Air Act, it has no intention of operating the Clairton Coke Works in a manner that does not pollute the lungs of its neighbors."