BREATHE PROJECT
The Air We Share

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U.S. Steel Clairton Coke Works Fire July 17, 2019 – Breathe Project Response

Environmental organizations in Southwestern Pennsylvania are still reviewing the information and known facts around the second "electrical" fire at the U.S. Clairton Coke Works that took place early this morning. In the meantime, Breathe Project has issued the following statement:

"Today's sulfur dioxide release is not the first one to have occurred since U.S. Steel reportedly repaired the plant on April 4," said Matt Mehalik, executive director of the Breathe Project. "According to the National Response Center, U.S. Steel released 525,000 cubic feet of coke oven gas on May 17, 2019. Today's incident is the second time in less than 10 weeks in which a major release has occurred."

"There is clear evidence that this plant cannot operate under control and these problems have not been resolved," Mehalik added. "What makes it worse is U.S. Steel's plans for a $1 billion reinvestment don't address the ongoing pollution problem that exist at the Clairton Coke Works."

The Breathe Project commended the Allegheny Health Department for making the news of the fire public immediately, including advising sensitive populations – those with respiratory conditions, children and the elderly – to take precautions at this time.

"The Breathe Project supports the enforcement order by ACHD, which documents U.S. Steel's inability to control emissions at the Clairton Coke Works. The Breathe Project agrees this matter should be resolved as quickly as possible to protect the health of the public."

*The **Breathe Project** is a collaboration of more than 28 environmental organizations including citizens, advocates, public health professionals and academics working to improve air quality, eliminate climate pollution and make our region a healthy, prosperous place to live. The Breathe Project website is its community outreach platform.*