OUR AIR

MON VALLEY



CLAIRTON RESIDENT & ADVOCATE
CARLA BEARD-OWENS
& HER GRANDAUGHTER

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
EJ
A CAMPAIGN OF 412 JUSTICE

412 Justice



"MY 10 YEAR OLD GRANDAUGHTER HAS ASTHMA."

"IT COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED IF THE MILL WAS ACCOUNTABLE FOR WHAT THEY DO TO US."

-CARLA BEARD-OWENS
CLAIRTON RESIDENT

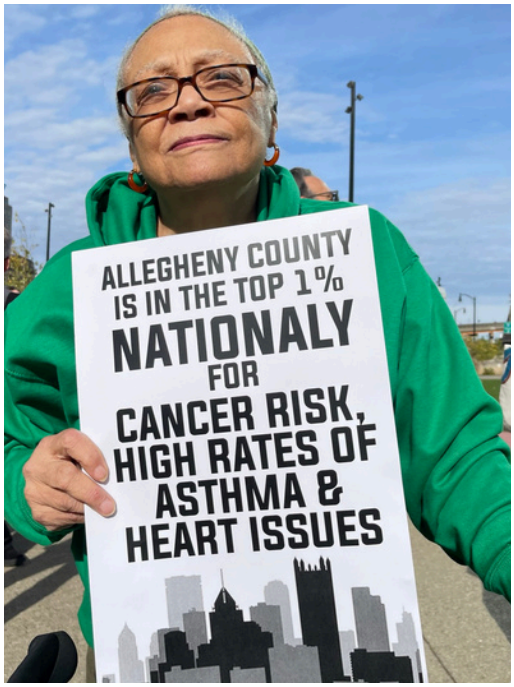


"Asthma rates in the children from Clairton are nearly double the rate reported by the state of Pennsylvania (18.4 percent vs. 10.2 percent, respectively). As in previous studies, African-Americans and poorer children from Clairton have significantly higher rates of previously diagnosed asthma compared to white and wealthier children."

*From the Surveillance and Tracking of Asthma in our Region's Schoolchildren (STARS) study. By Deborah Gentile, MD, and Jennifer Elliott, PharmD, both from the School of Pharmacy at Duquesne University, conducted asthma surveillance and tracking among elementary school children in the Pittsburgh region.

LETTER FROM THE ORGANIZER

#CleanAirforMonValley



Dear Community,

412 Justice is proud to present our all-encompassing Environmental Justice Report to the Mon Valley, helping residents better understand what it means to live in an Environmental Justice community. This report aims to empower communities to make changes in their own lives and communities so that they may live safer, healthier lives. This report provides an overview of the history, problems, and solutions associated with the air, water, food, land, and infrastructure in our region. Those living in the Mon Valley region know better than anyone the first-hand impacts attributed to these problems. Our solution-based approach to identifying these issues aims to build on what residents already know and experience.

The U.S. EPA defines Environmental Justice as, “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies.” This definition, however, fails to acknowledge the systematically marginalized communities facing the most severe impacts of Environmental Injustice. Historically, those in the U.S. who live in the most polluted environments are people of color and those living in poverty. Due to the same systemic patterns of racism and inequality in America, environmental injustice has been ingrained in almost every fiber of our country from the air we breath, to the food we eat. With the elimination of the Environmental Justice office in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), it is more important than ever for grassroots organizations like 412 Justice to uphold environmental justice in the communities we work with. In Pennsylvania, the people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment. Through our Environmental Justice Campaign efforts, 412 Justice aims to uphold and exceed this PA constitutional right for all of our impacted communities.



We hope this report will reveal the true state of Mon Valley Environmental Justice communities and will empower people to continue to fight for changes to keep themselves, their families, and their neighbors safe and healthy. We can’t do it alone, so please support everyone who took part in putting this information together for your easy reading.

If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to reach out to us at operations@412justice.org. We hope you enjoy the report and will join us in the fight for #CleanAirforAllegheny.

With Love & Solidarity,

412 Justice & NaTisha Washington

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PA Environmental Rights Amendment

PA is one of five unique states (including Montana, Rhode Island, New York, and Hawaii) that have an **Environmental Rights Amendment.** Proposed by State Legislator Franklin L. Kury on the first Earth Day in 1970, it received the unanimous assent of both the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and the Pennsylvania Senate. When put to the voters of Pennsylvania the following year, it was ratified by a vote of nearly four to one, with over one million people voting in favor.[1]

The Article I, Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution states:

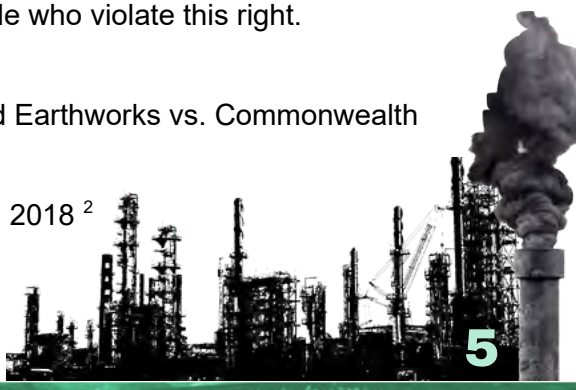


***"The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic, and aesthetic values** of the environment. Pennsylvania's public natural resources are the common property of all the people, including generations yet to come. As trustee of these resources, the Commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the people."*

This amendment **strengthens many environmental regulatory policies**, such as the PA Safe Drinking Water Acts, the Stormwater Management Act, and, most importantly, the Air Pollution Control Regulations, or "Article XXI," which help protect this right. Local environmental organizations, including Penn Future, Clean Air Council, PennEnvironment, EIP, and Fairshake Environmental Services, have used this constitutional right to support legal actions against companies and/or people who violate this right.

Some wins strengthened by this legal environmental protection include:

- Clean Air Council, PennFuture, Sierra Club, Protect Penn-Trafford, and Earthworks vs. Commonwealth 2023
- Frederick vs Allegheny Twp. Zoning Hearing Bd vs PA Commonwealth 2018 [2]
- Clean Air Council, PennEnvironment vs U.S Steel [3]
- Class action lawsuit for Edgar Thompson Mill's "rotten egg" smell [4]



ALLEGHENY AIR QUALITY HISTORY

1980: By 1984, jobs in the steel industry had declined to 236,000 from a peak of 650,000 in 1953 (currently, the steel industry employs about 143,000 people).[5] The year 1984 also marked the decline of coke battery crew numbers, with some facilities completely shutting down. During this time, unemployment rose to 13.9%, and millions in revenue were lost, making communities like Clairton experience serious financial hardship. During the 1980s, the local environmental organization Group Against Smog and Pollution (GASP) cooperated with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to enforce air quality standards at the U.S. Steel coke production facility, Clairton Coke Works, which helped significantly reduce their emissions. GASP continues to advocate for clean air to this day until the goal of zero pollution is met. (see in resource page)



BREAKER BOYS, WOODWARD COAL MINES, KINGSTON, PA. C. 1900

2000–2010: In 2006, the EPA established the health-focused National Ambient Air Quality Standards to monitor ozone, particulate matter (PM2.5), lead, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, and sulfur dioxide. Since the standards were set in 2006 (for particles) and 2010 (for SO2), there have been over 400 exceedances of the air quality standards for both sulfur dioxide and fine particles at Mon Valley monitors. The Mon Valley monitors made up 91% of the exceedances in Allegheny County.



SMOKE FROM AN EARLY 20TH CENTURY PITTSBURGH STEEL MILL.



AFTERMATH OF THE BATTLE OF HOMESTEAD/HOMESTEAD STRIKE JULY 6, 1892

2016: The closure of one of Pittsburgh's largest coal-processing plants in 2016 led to a lasting reduction in hazardous air pollution and a decrease in heart-related hospital visits, according to a new study. The Shenango Coke Works, located on Pittsburgh's Neville Island processed coal into coke, a key ingredient in steelmaking, until its closure in January 2016.[6] *Since the closure, an NYU research group found that heart related emergency room visits decreased by 42% due to pollution reduction from the closure.

PITTSBURGH AIR QUALITY HISTORY CONTINUED

2018: On December 24th (Christmas Eve), the Clairton Coke Works facility experienced a fire due to an equipment failure at the plant. This incident was not reported to residents until January 9 (16 days after the fire), who were exposed to 10 years' worth of pollution in just 3 months.[7] Video of this fire was thankfully captured on Breathe Cams and shared with the Health Department, along with many complaints from residents recorded on the Smell Pittsburgh App. Another fire erupted at Clairton Coke Works on June 17, 2019, resulting in a public hearing where Health Department leaders came out to hear from elected leaders and residents about these harmful concurrent issues. It was also found that “According to the National Response Center, U.S. Steel released 525,000 pounds of coke oven gas on May 17, 2019.[8]



U.S. Steel once again appeals air pollution fine

Andrew Rush/Post-Gazette

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APR 26, 2019 5:35 PM

2020: A multitude of fines were issued to U.S Steel during this year for many air quality violations, which means they exceeded the “healthy” limit of pollution for the day or years. These fines are being distributed through 2 funding sources: The Clean Air Fund & Community Benefits Trust. (We explain the two funding sources on page 34)

2022: In March 2022, ACHD imposed $859,300 in stipulated penalties against U.S. Steel for violations that occurred at the Clairton Coke Works during the last three quarters of 2021.[9] During the first quarter of 2022, they issued $458,225 in stipulated penalties for even more air violations.

PITTSBURGH AIR QUALITY HISTORY CONTINUED



By May 2022, ACHD joined the DOJ and EPA to file a court-appointed consent decree on Edgar Thompson Mills for their high emissions of H2S. This consent decree required U.S. Steel to submit semi-annual reports to the EPA and ACHD. The DOJ and EPA also demanded that U.S. Steel also paid a $1.5 million penalty and implement measures to mitigate odor and dust emissions.[10]

Organizers found that PM2.5 and VOCs were the main pollutants covered under the rule that required reporting. Other pollutants like H2S and Benzene were not covered, so if high quantities of H2S were present in the air but the PM2.5 was low, no warning would need to be made to the residents. West Mifflin residents were so unhappy with this lack of accountability that they filed a class action lawsuit against U.S. Steel for their “Noxious Odors” and “Fugitive Dust” in October.

2024: PennEnvironment reached a $42 million settlement of Clean Air Act enforcement against the Clairton Coke Works, Edgar Thompson Steel Mill, and Irvin Steel Mill in January 2024.[11] U.S. Steel was ordered to pay a $5 million penalty. $4.5 million of the penalty is going towards the funding of public health projects addressing poor air quality being directly experienced by Mon Valley Communities living near the three plants. The settlement also requires U.S. Steel to make $37 million worth of upgrades to maintenance and pollution control at the Clairton Coke Works and to retire Battery 15, one of the most polluting parts of the facility.



2025: The class action lawsuit against U.S. Steel’s Edgar Thompson plant, filed by West Mifflin residents, was taken to the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas. In February 2025, Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas Judge Alan D. Hertzberg accepted a $1.5 million settlement agreed to by U.S. Steel and its attorneys after the company denied all allegations made against it. This settlement led the company to spend $4.5 million on “Environmental Improvement Projects” at the Edgar Thompson Plant. Although legal action continues to be taken against these polluters, MonValley Communities are still facing the impacts of prolonged Air Pollution.



Aug. 2023, U.S. Steel’s Clairton Coke Works runs flares after lightning strike - WPXI



PHOTO BY CALEB KAUFMAN/PUBLICSOURCE

THE U.S. STEEL NIPPON SALE

After a proposed $7.3 billion purchase deal for U.S.Steel by Cleveland Cliffs was exposed, the journey to U.S. Steel has been an up-and-down battle. Depending on your values and experiences, you may have a different reaction to this decision, which sparked different perspectives within our communities about what the right choice was.

- **July 28, 2023:** Chairman and CEO of Cleveland-Cliffs writes a letter to US Steel CEO David Burrit and Chairman David Sutherland for an acquisition that includes $35/share with a split of cash and stock.
- **August 13, 2023:** U.S Steel rejected Cleveland-Cliffs' proposal
- **December 18, 2023:** US Steel and Nippon Steel announce a successful ALL CASH bid of $55 a share. Stocks closed at $49.59, which is a $25 increase for 2024
- **June 5, 2024:** U.S. Steel is listed as spending $100,000 to put its name before members of Congress in advance of its proposed takeover by a Japanese company.
- **October 2024:** US Steelworkers sue US Steel CEO David McCall for his unlawful acts during this acquisition
- **January 03, 2025:** Joe Biden, by executive order, blocked the acquisition under national security concerns
- **January 6, 2025:** U.S. Steel and Nippon sued President McCall, along with steelmaker Cleveland-Cliffs and its CEO
- **Jun 18, 2025:** Donald Trump approves the acquisition of U.S. Steel by Nippon Steel, reversing Biden's decision



Nippon Steel - U.S Steel

On June 18, 2025, U.S. Steel finalized its “historic partnership” with Nippon Steel. This $14.9 Billion deal gives the U.S. government a say in some matters, and there has been much talk but no final plans on what this means for the future of the Mon Valley. During the deal, Nippon agreed to put additional investments into the future of the Mon Valley and its local facilities. This agreement includes $11 Billion for facilities upgrades, especially in the Mon Valley ($2.4 Billion), which is good news, however there are no details yet on what those investments would be and when they would happen.





Due to the broken promises mentioned earlier, Mon Valley communities, especially low-income and Black communities, are skeptical of their voices being heard during this big change. As a prominent industry in the community, we want U.S. Steel and Nippon representatives to engage with the Mon Valley residents directly to talk about what this future should look like as ownership shifts. This sale can be either a turning point for Mon Valley Works or more of the same issues under a new owner who lives in Japan.



ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS TELL NIPPON STEEL TO CLEAN UP NEWLY-ACQUIRED U.S. STEEL PLANTS IN PITTSBURGH

REID FRAZIER · JUNE 27, 2025

Clarification on Nippon Ownership: U.S. Steel still exists! It acts as a brand name (subsidiary) under Nippon Steel rather than an independently operating corporation.

A History of Broken Promises from U.S. Steel

In 2024 the Breathe Project released a document titled "Mon Valley U.S. Steel Pollution Timeline: A history of 10 Broken Promises" to show the reason for mistrust between the company and local advocates. Some of these promises:





- **June 2008** – U.S. Steel promised to replace 3 of 12 of the oldest coke batteries at the Clairton Coke Works, a $1.2 billion upgrade it says will improve the region's air quality, but these upgrades didn't happen.

- **May 2019** – U.S. Steel promises to invest $1-$1.5 billion to upgrade the Mon Valley Works. On May 3, 2021, U.S. Steel canceled its promise to build and improve the Mon Valley Project. In January 2022 U.S. Steel announced they would be investing $3 billion in a next-generation electric arc furnace (EAF) mini mill in Osecola, Arkansas. This facility would cut carbon emissions up to 80% compared to traditional production.

- **June 2025** – Nippon Steel announced that they would commit $2.4 Billion to upgrades for the Mon Valley Works Edgar Thomson appears to be the 1st facility receiving these updates. Accepted permits for a new slag recycling facility. Proposed new hot strip mill at E.T.W. We hope they keep this promise.

2025 Clairton Battery Explosion



July 8, 2025

- U.S. Steel employees identified a coke oven gas leak from a downstream valve being cracked and applied a temporary repair.

July 28, 2025

- U.S. Steel held a meeting to define the scope of the work needed to fix the issue and review the hazards for the upcoming scheduled maintenance outage for Battery 13 planned for Aug. 19.

August 11, 2025

U.S. Steel held a meeting to define the scope of the work needed to fix the issue and review the hazards for the upcoming scheduled maintenance outage for Battery 13, planned for Aug. 19.

- ***10:30 a.m.*** - Three U.S. Steel employees proceeded to Battery 13 to exercise Battery 13's gas valve. At the time, their personal air quality monitors alarmed, and a supervisor directed workers to evacuate the basement, then called for the evacuation from Batteries 13 and 14.
- ***10:47 a.m.*** - An explosion occurred, with at least four people on top of Battery 14 and a nearby transfer area. According to the Chemical Safety Board investigation, the explosion occurred less than a minute after the evacuation order. In the hours that followed the blast, emergency responders recovered two bodies and worked to get medical attention for 10 others who suffered injuries. Officials from the federal, state, and local levels descended on the Mon Valley in the wake of the explosion, providing updates and announcing a multi-agency investigation into the cause of the incident.
- ***12:22 p.m. -*** ACHD third-party contractor Keramida confirmed in an email to the department that all employees were safe and that inspections had been suspended for the day.
- ***2:45 p.m. -*** A worker was found alive in the debris.
- ***7:30 p.m. -*** A second body was recovered from the rubble.

Our condolences to the families who lost their loved ones in this tragedy. This preventable incident should've never happened, and more should be done to protect our workers.



Sept. 29, 2025

The Chemical Safety Board (CSB) releases an update on its investigation into the explosion at the Clairton Coke Works that included preliminary information on its cause and included a detailed timeline of the events that unfolded Aug. 11. It was found that the explosion occurred in Batteries 13 & 14. The entire timeline of the incident can be found in CSB's report. For a full, developing timeline of the incident, refer to GASP's timeline on their website

What's in the air we're breathing?

Pittsburgh is known as the Steel City for being the birthplace of U.S. Steel and its industrial history. But currently, even with the advancing tech and health industries, our city is still home to some of the most polluted air in the nation, with some of the highest cancer rates!

These are a few of many impacts that physically and financially affect the Mon Valley and spread into the greater Pittsburgh and Southwestern Pennsylvania regions. Due to the Mon Valley being surrounded by the remaining old coal-related industries and the largest coke plant in America, residents living here are more likely to experience related health issues like cancer.



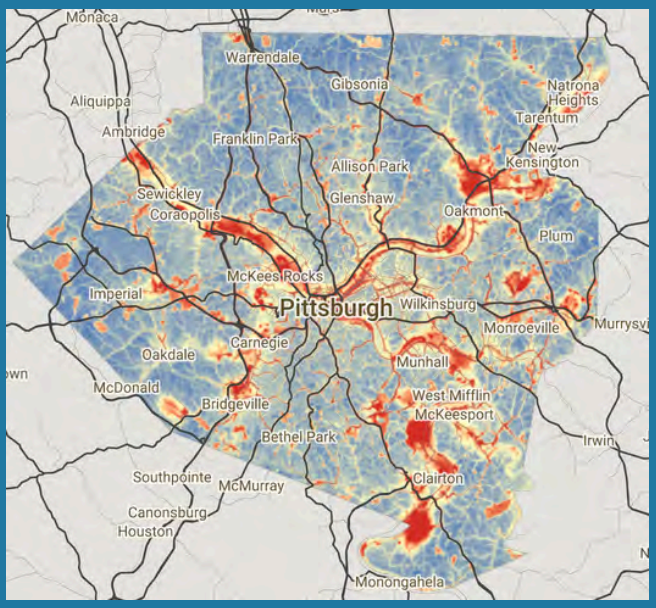
In this section, you will learn about:

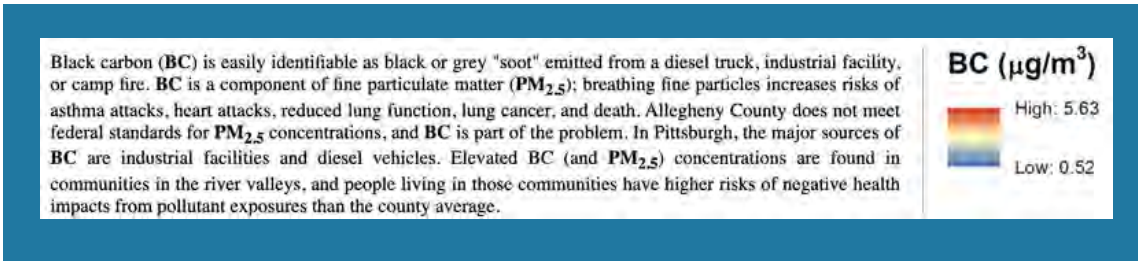
- The top health issues connected to industrial pollution, especially cancer rates, where we rank in the top 2% nation-wide
- Why our region continues to fail in the American Lung Association (ALA) report
- Why there continues to be a lack of investment in public health, even with millions collected in pollution fine money from U.S. Steel, and how our federal leaders and communities can hold polluters accountable for their negative impacts on the community

Most importantly, you'll learn how you can protect yourself and your community from harmful pollution, what those stinky toxic smells are, and what's happening with the pollution fine money

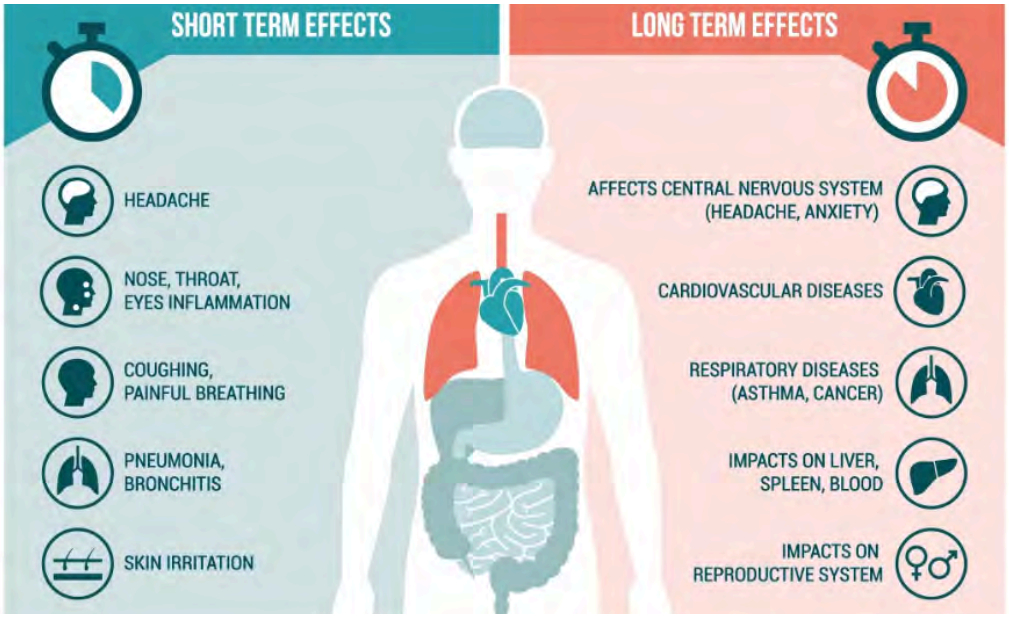
Problem: Air pollution is literally killing us!

In the 2018 "Fine Particulate Matter and Mortality in Allegheny County" study it was reported that an average of **640 - 1,373 people died each year from PM2.5 pollution**. With many of the environmental justice communities (also known as Sacrifice Zones) being majority people of color and/or low-income communities the chances of fatality is much higher. Black, Hispanic, Asian American, or American Indian and Alaskan Native were seen to have an **18% higher mortality rates** from PM2.5 pollution than communities with less than 10% of the population identifying as people of color. With pollution having the ability to worsen many health effects like respiratory issues, heart disease, maternal mortality and more, it's important that our county starts investing in this health crisis frontline communities face within the Mon Valley.





Knowing that most of these illnesses affect majority-black counties, we need to ensure community health is protected. The top three leading causes of death in Allegheny County have consistently been heart disease, cancer, and



unintentional injuries (accidents) with **heart disease and cancer remaining the top two leading causes of death**.[13] Both of these illnesses are commonly found in people living near pollution sources. Most toxic days are due to leaks and flarings happening at the plants, with the Coking plant being one of the most toxic due to the hazardousness of coking gas.

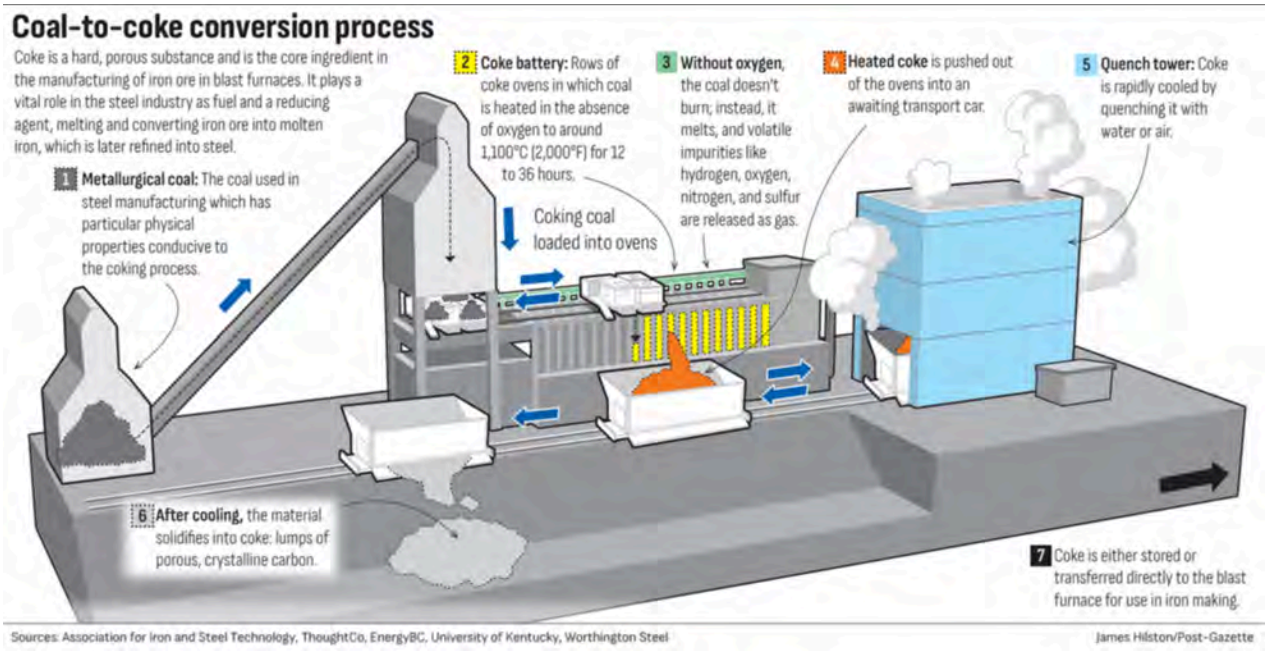
If the equipment that is continuously burning and quenching coke or steel were updated, we could see a major decrease in health-related attacks and ER visits. If the facility converted to “greener” steel, we may see an even bigger drop. If it closed, we would see major improvements in health all over the county.

Why does it smell like that?

Pollution is tiny stuff in the air, although some is more harmful than others. While some of the smoke you see is just “steam”, most machines that burn fuel send out chemicals you might smell and others you can’t, but they can still be bad for your health.

Common harmful pollutants are:

Pollutant	Smell	Color	Health effects
Hydrogen Sulfide (H2S)	Rotten Eggs	Colorless/Whiteish	Nausea, dizziness, confusion, headaches and sleeping problems, cardiovascular and gastrointestinal toxicity
Benzene	Sweet gasoline smell	Colorless or light yellow	Anemia, reproductive mortality, and some cancer including Leukemia
Soot/Particulate Matter (PM)	Smoky	Grey to Black	Asthma, COPD, Bronchitis, premature death, heart attacks, and strokes.



Solution: Community Air monitoring



Air monitoring helps communities track real-time air quality daily, so people can prepare for outdoor exposure or know when it's unsafe outside. Parents use monitors to make sure their kids have their inhalers throughout the day, and seniors with respiratory issues may cancel outdoor plans altogether. Locally, we have many air monitoring tools thanks to the dedicated work of environmental advocates.

Air Quality Index

US AQI Level		PM2.5 (µg/m³)	Health Recommendation (for 24 hour exposure)
WHO PM2.5 (µg/m³) Recommended Guidelines as of 2024: **0-5.0**			
Good	0-50	0-9.0	Air quality is satisfactory and poses little or no risk.
Moderate	51-100	9.1-35.4	Sensitive individuals should avoid outdoor activity as they may experience respiratory symptoms.
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101-150	35.5-55.4	General public and sensitive individuals in particular are at risk to experience irritation and respiratory problems.
Unhealthy	151-200	55.5-125.4	Increased likelihood of adverse effects and aggravation to the heart and lungs among general public.
Very Unhealthy	201-300	125.5-225.4	General public will be noticeably affected. Sensitive groups should restrict outdoor activities.
Hazardous	301+	225.5+	General public at high risk of experiencing strong irritations and adverse health effects. Should avoid outdoor activities.

EJ DICTIONARY:

- **Mortality** refers to the state of being mortal (destined to die). Mortality may be reported for people who have a certain disease, live in one area of the country, or who are of a certain gender, age, or ethnic group.
- **Frontline Communities** are those that are hit first and worst by climate pollution and extreme weather.



Public air monitoring tools include:

Indoor air monitoring

Air outside ultimately enters our homes through our vents, windows, and any opening for air, even if it's just a small crack. Many HVAC systems have air filters that clean the air before it flows into your vents, but if you or your landlord don't replace these filters every 3 months, pollutants are more likely to get into your home. Once inside, the pollutants can get trapped in the home. Sometimes opening windows makes it worse if it's a bad air day.



Reducing Outdoor Contaminants in Indoor Spaces (ROCIS) has been working since 2014 to reduce the impact of outdoor contaminants in indoor spaces. With expertise in indoor air quality, monitoring, energy performance, public health, behavioral and technical interventions, and data analytics, their team delivers presentations, webinars, and white papers on air quality, monitoring, and interventions to reduce exposure.[14]

For residents living in the Mon Valley, Valley Clean Air Now distibutes Indoor Air Filters free of charge. Learn more at www.valleycleanair.com/air-cleaners

Fenceline monitoring

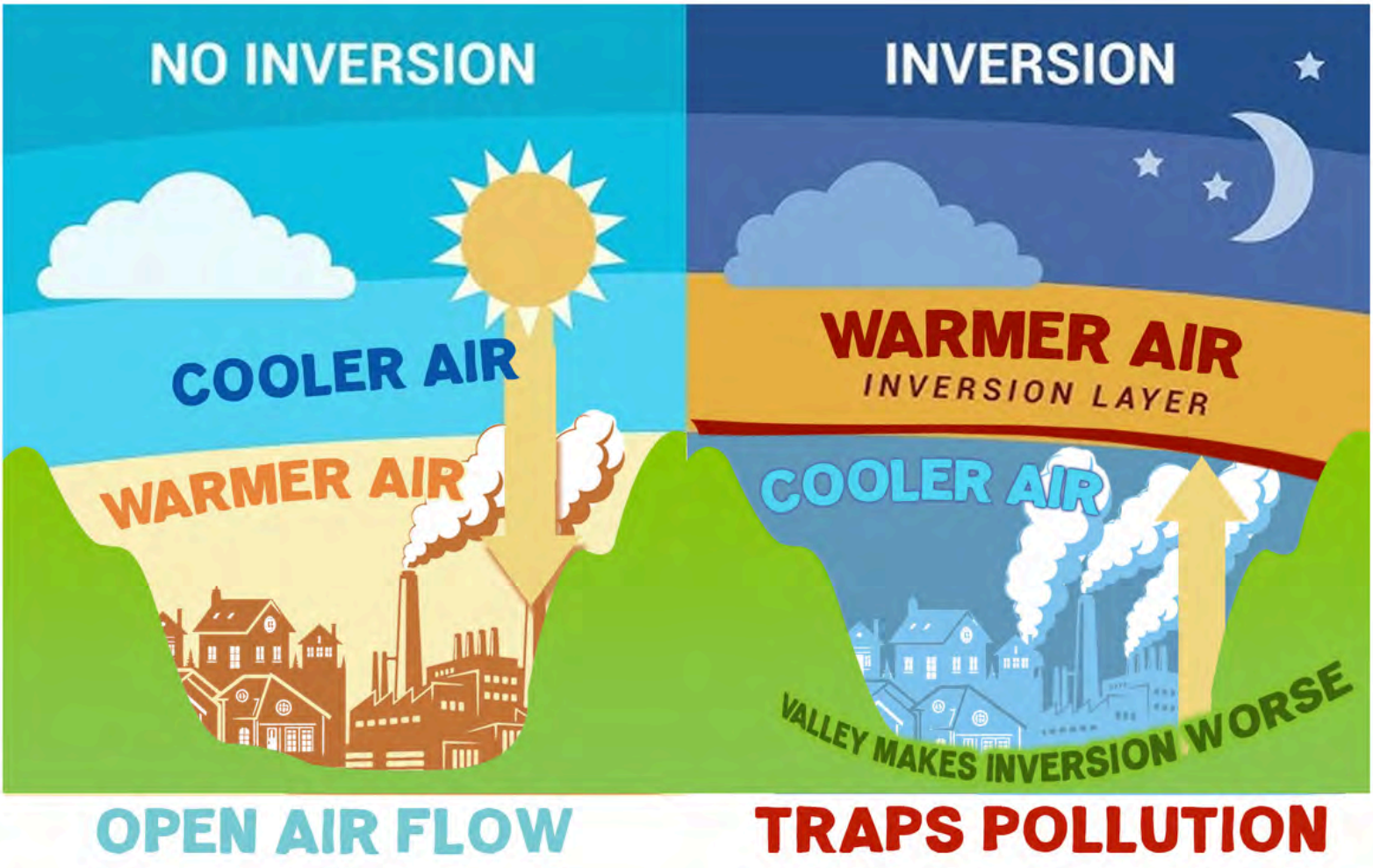
Fenceline monitoring is a monitoring practice that measures invisible, toxic pollutants like benzene along the fencelines of industrial sites. This practice has been proposed in our county to be added to the Title V permit process to aid our departments in knowing more quickly and accurately the pollution spikes happening at major polluting facilities. Currently, facilities are pushing back on adding this to their Title Vs because it's stated as "not feasible" for the companies that we know are often violating their pollution levels. This would provide better real-time reports on poor air quality from industry to the Health Department, allowing it to notify the community more quickly by email, phone, and text. Imagine how many lives could be saved if we received a **"Pollution Alert,"** like an **Amber Alert,** on our phones when the air outside is toxic.

Air Quality Community Notifications

Residents' biggest concern is knowing when the air is safe to breathe, especially for those with asthma or other existing health conditions. Since pollution often **spikes between 2:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m**., many people are unaware of dangerous air quality while they sleep. Real-time air quality alerts sent to phones, computers, or local news can help residents take action, avoid exposure, and potentially prevent emergency room visits.

Inversion seasons

Weather can change our air quality in an instance depending on how the wind blows or rain falls. In meteorology, **an inversion (or temperature inversion) is a phenomenon in which a layer of warmer air overlies cooler air. Inversion traps air pollution, such as smog, near the ground**.[15] They usually happen during the changes in the seasons when the air temperatures are changing which causes more spikes in pollution during this time. Holding pollutants close to the ground can cause just as bad of an experience as poor air days even if the pollution is low. Some people mistake thick smoke for water vapor fog (which can sometimes be true), but it may actually be trapped pollutants. During fall and spring, be cautious on these days and consider wearing a mask outdoors.



PITTSBURGH'S Public Source

Study on health benefits of Neville Island coke plant closure raises questions about Clairton

A new study found ER visits dipped steeply after a coke plant closed in Neville Island seven years ago. Advocates say this raises renewed concerns for a far larger plant still operating in the Mon Valley.

Roman Hladio
September 5, 2023

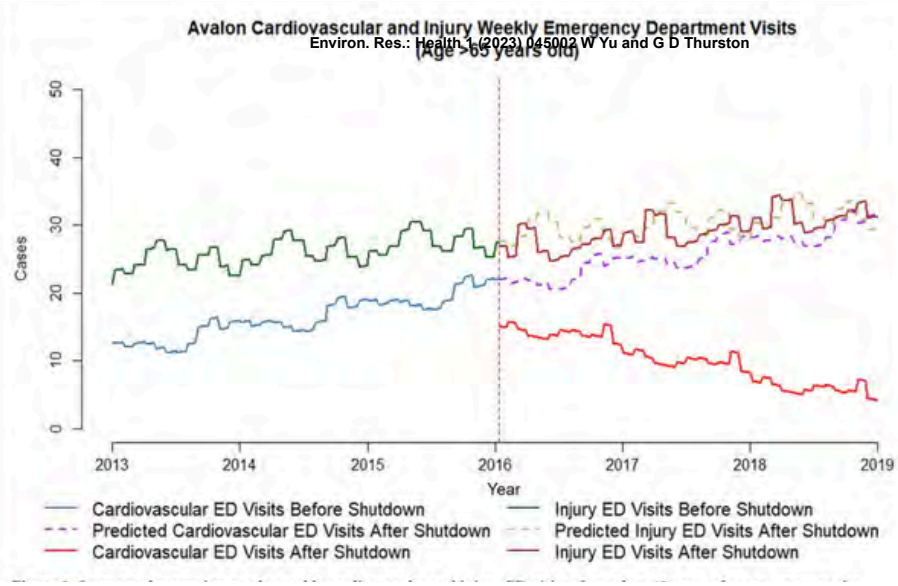


Shenango Coke Works in operation on Neville Island in 2015. (Photo courtesy of Brian Cohen for the Heinz Endowments)



How a steel closure on Neville Island improved the community's health

Thanks to efforts from local environmental advocates there have been more enforcements for cleaner air from major polluting industries like our #1 polluter, Clairton Coke Works. Housing the largest coking plant in the nation and only being one hour away from the Shell Plastic plant, we are exposed to a cocktail of cancerous pollutants by pollution violators. Closing polluting industries has shown improvements in the environment and public health, the most recent evidence being the closing of the Shenango Coke Plants where residents saw a 45% decrease in heart-related ER visits after its closure. This proves that changes in industrial pollution improves our overall public health.



Problem: Industrial Pollution is Raising Health Risks

Allegheny County ranks in the top 1 percent of counties in the U.S. for cancer risk from air pollution. Lung-related cancers account for the largest share of cancer deaths in Allegheny County. While the county attributes this mainly to tobacco use, many scientists and doctors point to strong links between industrial pollution in the Mon Valley and lung cancer, especially among non-smokers. Sex and racial disparities in cancer mortality rates are very present in Allegheny County. In 2020, Black males and Black females died from cancer at a 1.3 times higher rate than white males and females.[16]

Population Type	# of Population at Risk
Total (in Allegheny County)	1,231,814
Under 18	225,556
Over 65	260,548
Pediatric Asthma	18,545
Adult Asthma	121,623
COPD	67,936
Lung Cancer	656
Cardiovascular Disease	102,113
Pregnancy	12,539

Air Pollution Does NOT Play Fair

Air pollution impacts every individual differently. While you and your neighbors may be exposed to the same levels of air pollution, some populations are especially vulnerable to illness and even death from their exposure.

These *at-risk populations* are typically those of a certain age (below 18 or over 65), those with pre-existing respiratory or cardiovascular illnesses, or those who are pregnant.

See in the table the number of people in Allegheny County who are considered to be a part of the *at-risk population.*

Data sourced from American Lung Association: 2026 State of the Air Report[17]

Air Pollution Impacts Maternal & Infant Health

Studies like the National Institute of Health's "Air Pollution and Pregnancy" study found that exposure to high levels of air pollutants increases risks of reproductive health issues, such as:

- **Maternal hypertensive disorders**
  - Maternal hypertensive disorders are high blood pressure conditions during pregnancy that can harm both the mother and baby.
- **Postpartum depression**
  - Postpartum depression is a serious mood disorder after childbirth that causes lasting feelings of sadness, anxiety, or hopelessness.
- **Placental abruption**
  - Placental abruption is a serious pregnancy complication where the placenta separates from the uterus before birth.
- **Low birth weight**
  - Low birth weight is when a baby is born smaller than expected for their gestational age, increasing health risks for the infant.
- **Pre-term birth**
  - Pre-term birth is when a baby is born before 37 weeks of pregnancy, increasing the risk of health complications.
- **Infant mortality**
  - Infant mortality is the death of a baby before age one.
- **Adverse lung and respiratory effects**
  - Adverse lung and respiratory effects are harmful impacts on the lungs and breathing caused by exposure to pollution or other risks**.**

This not only leads to deadly outcomes for women and their infants but also leaves a long-lasting trauma that can literally and figuratively leave scars. Allegheny Health Department's infant mortality report[18] found that **Black birthers are two times more likely to experience maternal death, and Black infants were almost four times more likely to die before their first birthday.**

We have FAILED our ALA report cards

Even though our air is slowly improving, we are still receiving failing grades for our PM2.5 and ozone levels in the annual American Lung Association 2026 State of the Air report. Some industries dismiss these research-based findings, claiming they make them look bad or overlook improvement efforts, but the data and lived experience still show our air does not meet healthy standards.

Year	High Ozone Days	Particulate Matter (PM) Days	National Rank for PM
2023 (canadian fires)	D	F	16th Worst
2024	D	F	26th Worst
2025	C	F	20th Worst

Asthma Attacks Are Keeping Our Communities Home

Asthma is a long-term lung condition that causes narrowed airways and difficulty breathing. In 2019, an Asthma Task Force reported **that Black children under 5 were more than four times more likely than white children in our county to be breathing the most polluted air**. In 2020, Asthma expert and clinical researcher Dr. Deborah Gentile worked with fellow experts to research child health issues related to air pollution. Their report revealed a lot of common issues and disparities amongst children who live in these EJ communities. In April of 2025, Dr. Gentile and other climate researchers did another study titled “School absenteeism linked to PM2.5 and SO2 exposure in students with asthma from environmental justice areas with elevated AQI risk.”[19] This report highlighted the number of school children missing class due to asthma.

22.5% of Children in the Clairton area have asthma **(double the national 8% and state average 11%)**. Even while in the womb, children are still impacted by the poor air their mothers are breathing. Black youth had the highest rates of up to 26.8%, and 5 youth had decreased lung function.

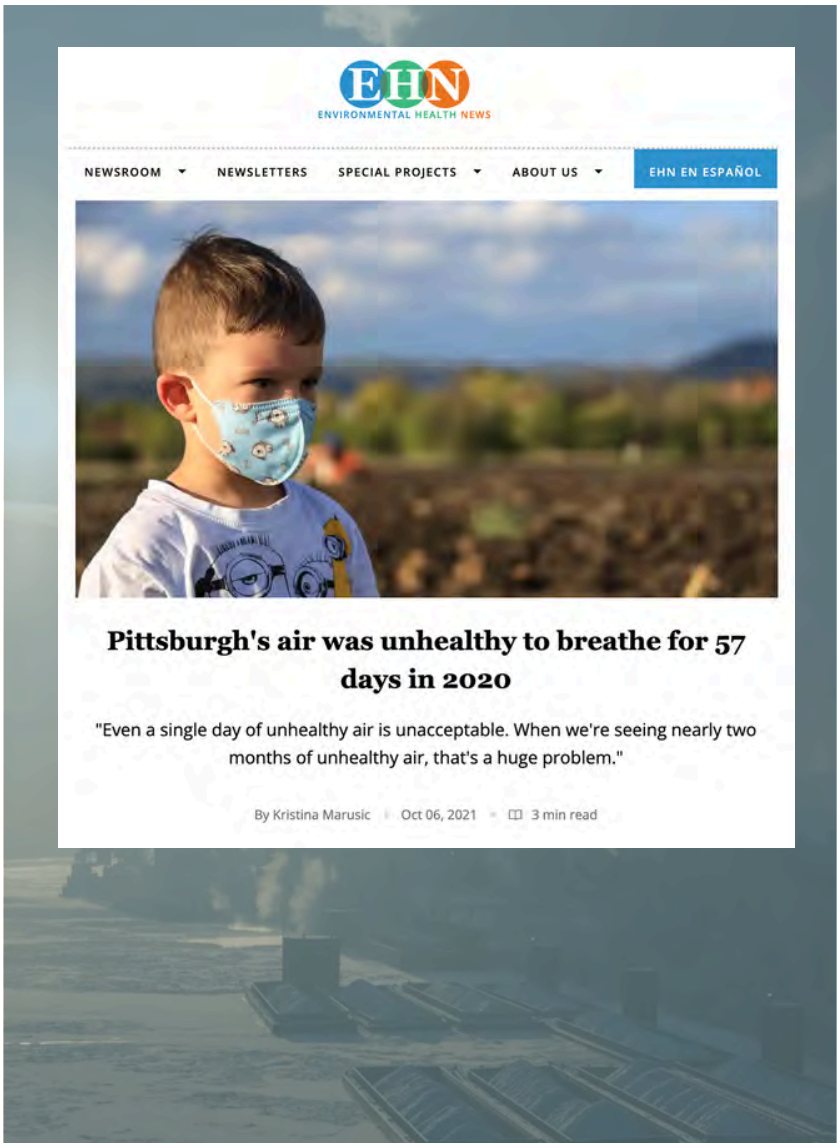


EJ DICTIONARY:

- **Coking plant** is a facility that produces coke, a crucial material used in the production of steel. Coke is a carbon-rich substance derived from heating coal in an environment with limited oxygen, a process known as coking.
- **Smog** is a fog made heavier and darker by smoke and chemical fumes

On poor air quality days children missed more than one-third of their school days. The study found that the risk of being absent for students with asthma is approximately 80% higher on days with high SO2 and 20% higher on days with high PM2.5 exposure. Allegheny County found that **Lung-related cancers make up the largest proportion of cancer deaths (21% in 2020)**.[20] Even though this is often connected to tobacco smoking, there is lots of evidence that shows improvements to respiratory and heart health due to reduced pollution.

Even though we often talk a lot about childhood asthma, **Adults are 7 times more likely to die from asthma than children.** Female adults are more likely to die from asthma than male adults while male children are more likely than female children. **Black people in the U.S. are nearly 2 times more likely to die from asthma than White people in the U.S**.[21]



Breathing shouldn't cost a hospital bill

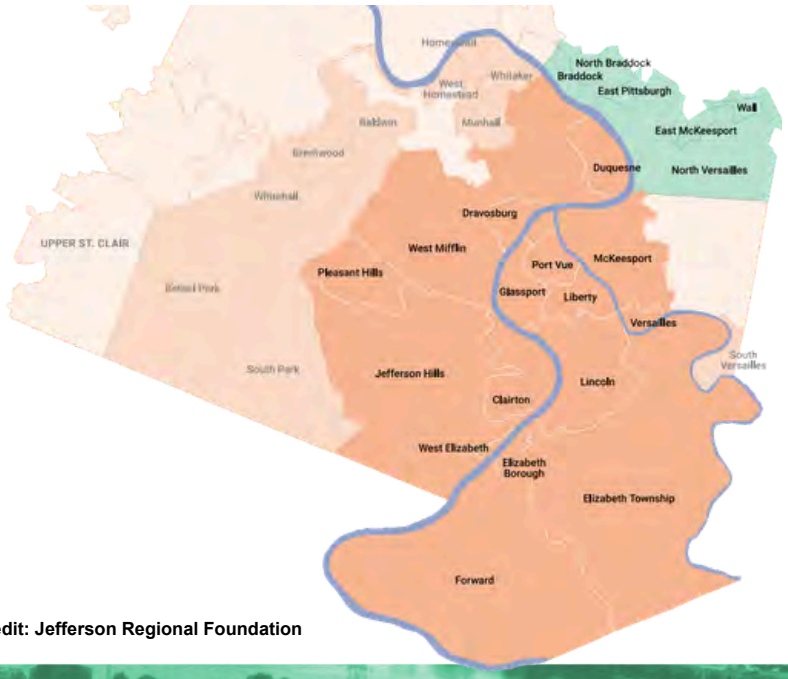
In 2024 Allegheny County hospitals reported an estimated 2,083 asthma-related emergencies.[22] **One ER visit can cost a family around $2,000 in PA and some copays ranging from $20 - $150** (or more). If you include EMS/ambulances, that can add over $1,500 to a bill, which could put a major strain on households with limited income. This often can result in deadly incidents for people who can't afford to travel safely to the nearest hospital.



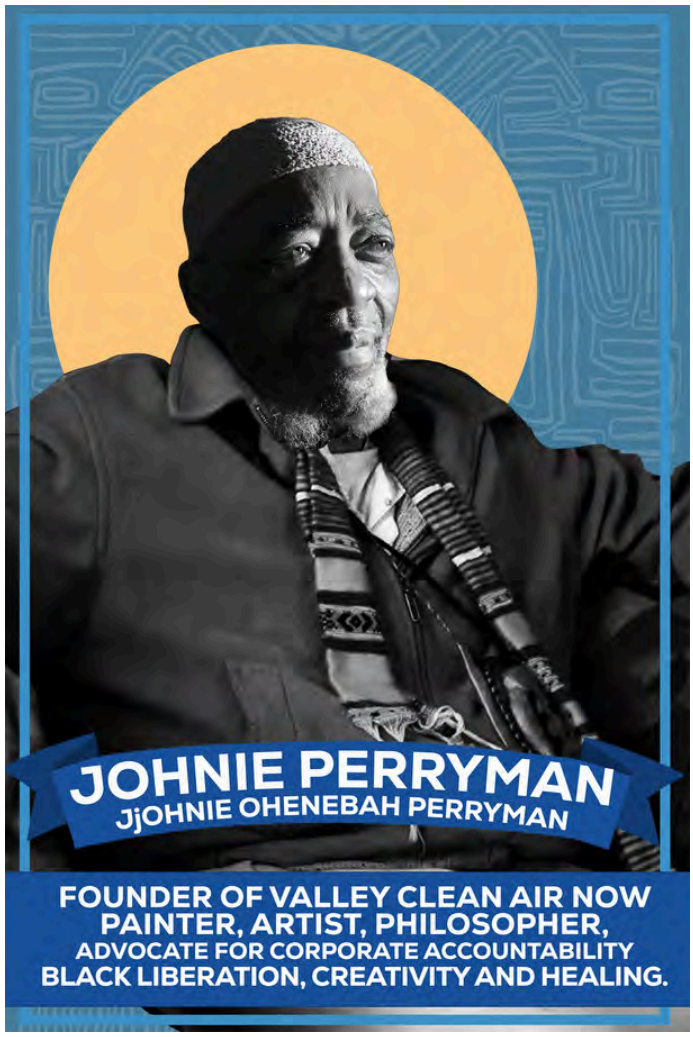
Solutions:
At-Home Air Filtration

The best immediate relief for residents living in polluted areas are air filters! With old homes and toxic stenches seeping through their windows, residents can find themselves living in spaces that are exposing them to harmful pollutants daily. Having a filter in the home can turn a concerning, cough-ridden day into a moment where someone can actually breathe. It's been found that **air filters remove airborne pollutants, reduce allergy and asthma symptoms, decrease the risk of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and lower the potential for headaches and brain fog associated with poor indoor air quality.** To know the best times to turn on your filter, it's recommended to also have a low-cost monitor or receive notifications from local monitoring networks.

Johnie Perryman, who founded the Air Filter Distribution Program at Valley Clean Air Now, a resident-led air quality advocacy nonprofit, has helped distribute over 600 air filters in Mon Valley communities. The program began on May 30, 2020, providing filters to residents to help them breathe more easily. Over the past five years, it has expanded across multiple Mon Valley communities, with plans to reach more areas near pollution sources like the Edgar Thomson mill in Braddock. **VCAN is currently distributing thousands of filters and monitors throughout the Mon Valley**



Credit: Jefferson Regional Foundation



The Power of Trees

Trees are known to clean CO2 and some pollutants out of the air through their leaves that release pure oxygen. The more trees there are, the more filtering that can be done to filter pollution naturally through the environment's water, soil, and air. **Even though they are helpful, trees are not as effective as the filters in our homes, and it will take years to see significant change.** The survival rate of trees is low due to many city factors, like salt trucks, the cost of planting labor, and maintenance. Tree planting has become a low-hanging fruit solution used for many years now by smaller boroughs and local organizations with limited funding and capacity.

Problem: Polluters are not being held accountable

In 2023, Penn Environment compiled a list of the top 10 Major Air Polluters (the Toxic Ten) in Allegheny County.[23] In the Toxic 10, 2 of the Mon Valley Works facilities are placed on this list: **Edgar Thomson at number 9 and Clairton Coke Works at number 1. Despite the findings in this report, neither of these facilities has done much to change the trajectory of their pollution.**

Allegheny County Role in Our Air Quality

Allegheny County is one of the very few counties in the nation that can locally control and enforce its own air quality standards without depending on state approval. This rule was enacted through Article XXI (Article 21), which includes the creation of our **Air Quality Program (AQP)**. The AQP is a county-level regulatory agency that works closely with the PA DEP Air Quality Program. The regulatory power of the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) is only within county limits for point source pollution. Pollution standards are set by the EPA and the PA DEP, which are incorporated into Allegheny County regulation, Article XXI: Air Quality Rules and Regulations[24]



There are four sub-programs within Air Quality that accomplish the work:

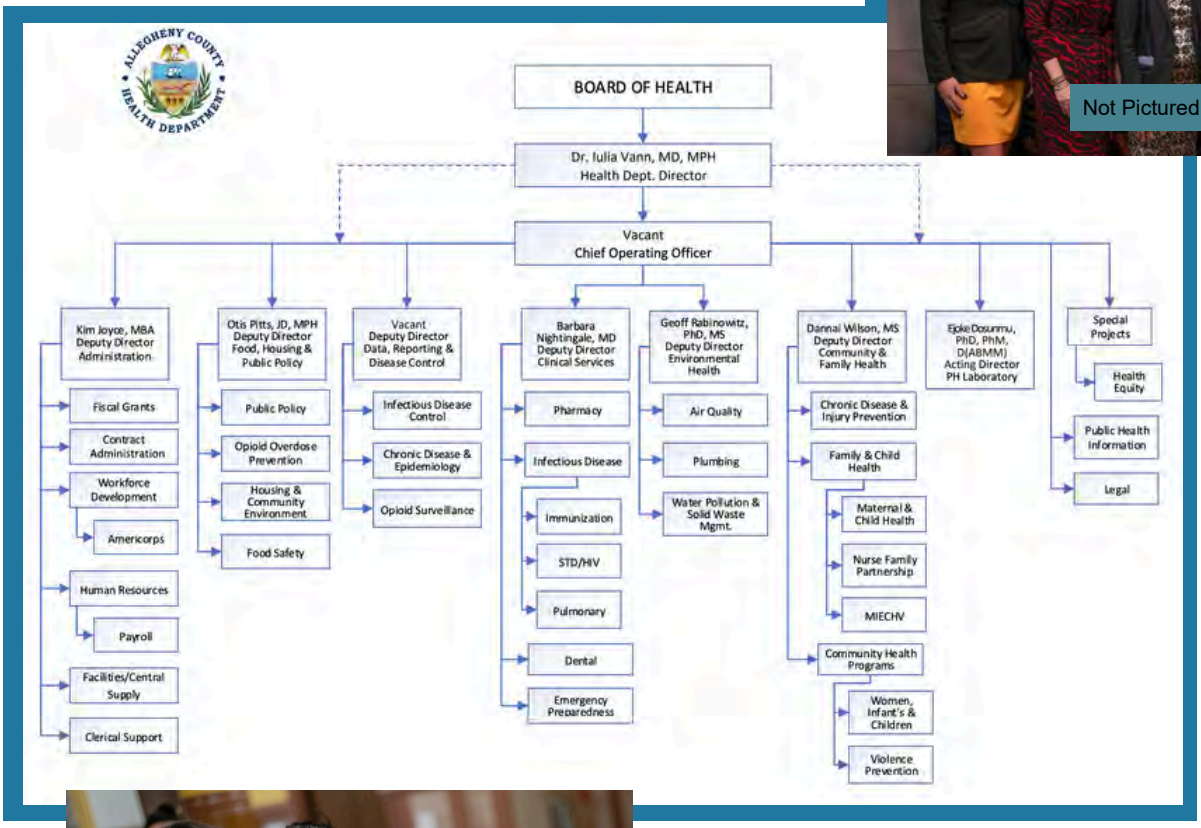
1. **The Monitoring section** is composed of air quality technicians, analysts, and engineers who are primarily responsible for the upkeep of ACHD's network of air quality monitoring stations.
2. **Planning & Data Analysis** is composed primarily of air quality control engineers, scientists, and atmospheric modelers who review and validate monitored air quality data, analyzing data for trends and sources, modeling air quality, and developing control strategies. They also do an **Emissions Inventory** to measure and monitor facility emission levels.
3. **The Permitting Team** is composed of air pollution control engineers who issue operating and installation permits to major sources of air pollution within Allegheny County. They are a **major source, also known as Title V facilities**, which are defined by the EPA and Article XXI as any source with the potential to emit more than standard levels.
4. **The Enforcement section's** main goal is to ensure that facilities comply with regulations. This includes the **Asbestos & Abrasive Blasting** program that has its own inspectors dedicated to overseeing asbestos abatement and abrasive blasting projects.

EJ DICTIONARY:

- **Emissions** are substances released into the air and are measured by their concentrations, or parts per million (ppm), in the atmosphere.
- **Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)** is responsible for protecting and preserving the land, air, water, and public health through enforcement of the state's environmental laws.

This **Allegheny Health department** is mainly supervised by the **Allegheny County Executive** (ACE) and the **Board of Health** (BOH) with many major policy and financial decisions coming to the **Allegheny County Council**. In 2024 we got a new ACE, BOH, and Health Director that has sparked some positive change in the department.[25] In June of 2024, Allegheny County Council approved Dr. Iulia Vann as the next Director of the Allegheny County Health Department.


Not Pictured: DeWitt Walton - District 10





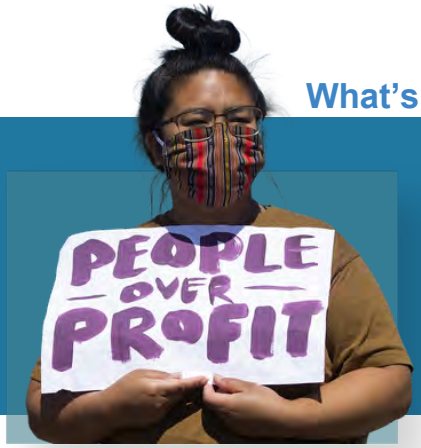


Air Advisory Committee

The Air Advisory Committee makes recommendations to the Allegheny County Board of Health on changes to air quality rules and advises on air quality management. Although it is an advisory body, its recommendations still carry weight in county air quality decisions.

EJ DICTIONARY:

- Endangerment finding - The Administrator finds that the current and projected concentrations of the six key well-mixed greenhouse gases CO2, CH4, N2O, HFCs, PFCs, and SF6 in the atmosphere threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations.



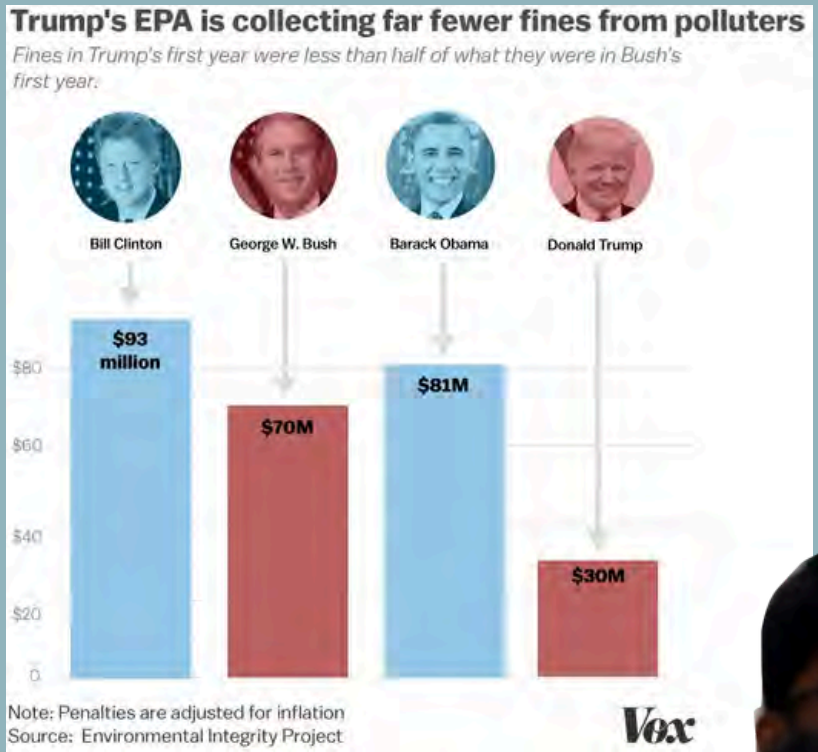
What's going on with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)?

The EPA is a federal agency that protects human health and the environment, conducts research, and enforces environmental laws. Recent administrative changes have reversed some environmental justice progress. In the past, environmental groups could turn to the EPA for support when local enforcement was lacking and help advance environmental justice policies.

EPA under Trump

- Trump EPA repealed the Endangerment Finding, which obligated the government to protect Americans from climate pollution.
- Trump gutted 31 pollution protections that kept us safe from harmful air pollutants and toxic chemicals linked to brain damage and cancer. Together, these pollution protection rollbacks were set to deliver $275 billion in benefits per year and prevent 30,000 deaths annually.
- Trump EPA weakened the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards that were expected to reduce toxic metal emissions by 67% and generate $430 million in health and climate benefits.
- Trump's EPA sought to get rid of stricter air pollution protections for soot, which is linked to heart attacks, cancer, and premature deaths.

AND MORE...





Solution: Make Polluters Pay for Clean Air

Some companies find it cheaper to pay fines rather than fix their pollution problems, and the community pays the price. Lobbyists for some industries try to influence lawmakers to set lower pollution limits or create exemptions, which can delay or reduce required upgrades. Much like the landlords who do patchwork on their properties, there have been few improvements made. Pollution issues at U.S Steel could easily be improved if they shut down their leaking battery, which was enforced through a lawsuit settlement!



Major polluters believe the money they pay to the County for their wrongdoing is an "unfair cost," even though industries like U.S. Steel have made billions in profits. Some of these fines and fees, compared to their profits, are like the cost of a cup of coffee. These rightful charges could provide more capacity for our health department and, if distributed properly, could help address the very issues they are meant to penalize. We will not allow polluters to play the victim role and, if necessary, will also hold those listed above responsible for the health of the community they were sworn in to protect.

Clairton Christmas Fire Lawsuit

On December 24, 2018, a little after 4 a.m., a fire occurred at Clairton Coke Works, causing sulfur dioxide to be released into the air and resulting in poor air quality throughout the day, with lingering pollution over the following week. During the fire, there was an increase in emergency room and doctor visits from people experiencing respiratory and heart problems, many of whom were not aware of the pollution caused by the fire. Six months later, in June, the Coke Works plant had another fire, which led residents to strongly **advocate for better protections and investments to improve public health.**



Photo: Christmas fire


Photo: August explosion

EJ Dictionary:

- **Lobbyist** - An individual or group of individuals who meet with government officials with the goal of influencing policy. Most career lobbyists are employed by major corporations, especially industrial corporations.

Solution continued

More than 2,300 air-quality complaints were submitted to the ACHD after this incident, resulting in the County proposing new coke oven rules and regulations for the plant. Many residents commented on their experiences during and after the fire, which caused so much concern that many residents considered moving to a healthier community. Picking up to leave is not that simple, or even wanted by most, but when you have to choose between your family slowly dying or staying in the place they call home, the tough decision usually lands on moving.





In January of 2024, a $42 million settlement was filed by Penn Environment, the National Environmental Law Center, the Clean Air Council, and some local residential witnesses. It was by far **the largest Clean Air Act citizen enforcement suit in Pennsylvania history**, and **one of the three largest ever nationally**. Most of the penalty money ($4.5 million) will fund public health projects through the newly established Mon Valley Public Health Fund, facilitated by the Jefferson Regional Foundation.

Through this settlement, U.S. Steel is also required to make $37 million worth of upgrades to its maintenance and pollution control at the Clairton Coke Works and retire one of the dirtiest parts of the facility.[18] This lawsuit stemmed from a 2018 fire at Clairton Coke Works facilities that was due to a control failure, and the worst part was that residents weren't even aware of the toxic pollution until two weeks later in the new year.

EJ DICTIONARY:

- **Coke Batteries** are series of coke ovens stacked in rows into which coal is loaded and processed into coke. It is commonly used for melting iron ore into a liquid state.
- **Permit** is an official, often written document granting authorization to do something, typically issued by a governmental or regulatory authority.

Fines vs Fees

Even after the fire and lawsuit, U.S. Steel continues to hold the title of the most toxic and air pollution-violating facility in our county, and sometimes the worst in the nation. During 2024, the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) issued a $1.99 million fine to U.S. Steel for 362 operating permit violations at its Clairton Coke Works. The company has racked up $14 million in fines since the beginning of 2022 with the health department. [26]



This is just a small portion of the many millions U.S. Steel has paid (and continues to pay) in fines for violating the air pollution standards of our country. The fines collected are split into the Allegheny Clean Air Fund and the Community Benefit Trust (which expired in 2024), which are both grant systems that were supposed to be used to help make improvements in Mon Valley boroughs. These fines were originally supposed to be used in ways that would clean the air and improve the health of residents, but unfortunately, that has not been successful. The official definitions are:

- **Civil Penalties/Fines** are monetary assessments paid by a person or regulated entity due to a violation or noncompliance with the environmental statutes and regulations. Penalties are designed to recover the economic benefit of noncompliance and to compensate for the seriousness of the violation.[27]
- **Air Quality Annual Operating Permit Fee** is a recurring charge levied by a state environmental agency on facilities operating under an air quality operating permit, typically assessed annually, to cover the costs of administering and enforcing air quality regulations and maintaining the health of the local air environment. These fees fund air quality programs, allowing for the timely review of permits, enforcement of standards, and general air quality assessments necessary to protect public health and the environment.



WE WON!!



Historic Permit Fee Increase PASSED!

On November 18, 2025, the Allegheny County Council unanimously voted yes (13-0) to pass the long-needed and advocated-for Permit Fee increase. This will increase air pollution permit fees to air polluters, especially major source air polluters like U.S./Nippon, and direct the money to the Allegheny County Health Department to contribute to their Air Quality program. The increased fees may be used for facility inspections, processing permits, enforcement, monitoring, and fully staffing the Air Quality program at the Health Department. While this is a massive win that could lead to the improvement of Pittsburgh's air quality, there is still work to be done to ensure that community voices are continuously heard and included regarding the state of our air quality.

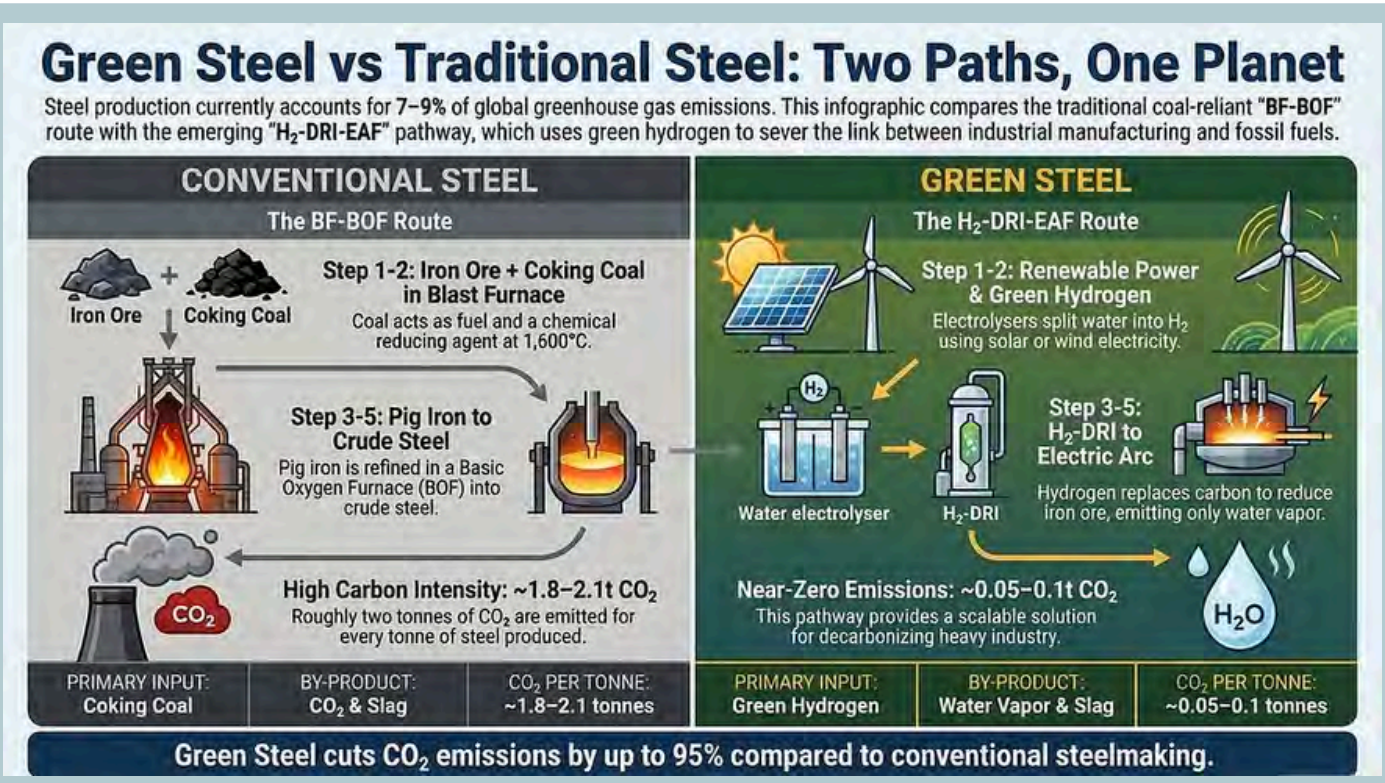


The **Clean Air Act requires that fees imposed on major sources of air pollution in Allegheny County** be sufficient to cover all reasonable (direct and indirect) costs required to develop and administer the Health Department's Title V permit program. If companies paid for equipment updates instead of racking up millions in fines and settlements, they would be able to pay off and reduce their fine debt, and majorly reduce emissions and pollution.

Solution continued

What is Green Steel, and is it a healthier option?

Green steel has become a new concept and an alternative to the current steel infrastructure. In China, this has become a growing industry, but it is still a newer concept in the US. In the 2024 Ohio River Valley Institute (ORVI) report, it was shown that transitioning to fossil fuel-free steelmaking could grow total jobs supported by steelmaking in the region by 27% to 43% by 2031, forestalling projected job losses. Regional jobs supported by traditional steelmaking are expected to fall by 28% in the same period, data show. Additionally, the report shows that transitioning to fossil fuel-free steelmaking will cut Pennsylvania's industrial sector emissions by 4 million metric tons of CO2 per year, improving quality of life and saving the state $380 million in health, community, and environmental costs. Steel traditionally invests money into improving its facilities' equipment, but there are many more options for clean production. These alternatives would involve less pollution, healthier jobs, and a cleaner future.[28]



The goal for many environmentalists and health professionals is transitioning this pay-to-pollute system into a harm prevention system that works to improve, not stall, the issue. Financial records from **US Steel show a net earnings of $384 million,** with Open Secrets showing they **spent approximately $3.5 million on lobbying last year** to support both Democratic and Republican parties. With the transition of ownership, there are **common concerns locally about the Nippon agreement, including:**

- **Does this mean U.S. Steel is no longer in charge?**
- **What does their promised investment mean?**
- **Will there actually be an increase in jobs? (more than temporary construction jobs).**

What are Title V's ?

Title V Operating Permits incorporate the conditions of all existing operating and installation permits, as well as any other conditions necessary to demonstrate compliance with the Clean Air Act and Allegheny County's Article XXI - Air Pollution Control. This includes the Operating Permit, the Technical Support Document, and the Comment/Response Document. When permits are drafted, there is a minimum 30-day public comment period, followed by a 45-day EPA review period. Advocates utilize this process to recommend stronger regulations and enforcement on major polluters while using the public comment period to express their issue with the current operations.

Throughout this section, we mentioned many **grant sources related to the fines collected from air pollution violations and settlements.** Below, we give a summary of each, how they are funded, and where the money goes.



Mon Valley Public Health Fund

Funding from fine money is RARELY going to public health efforts and programming in the Mon Valley, like air filter & monitor distributions. So, as mentioned above, there was a $42 million lawsuit settlement announced in January 2024 that came from the efforts of local and national groups that **required U.S. Steel to spend $38 million in facility upgrades and were FORCED to shut down their most toxic batteries 1, 2, and 3** that were leaking like battery 15, which was the culprit of the Christmas Fire. In addition to this agreement, they were forced to pay a $5 million penalty, now known as the Mon Valley Public Health Fund, which is being facilitated by the Jefferson Regional Foundation. **Payments amounting to $450,000 shall be disbursed** through the foundation and Allegheny County Economic Development over five years.[29]

EJ DICTIONARY:

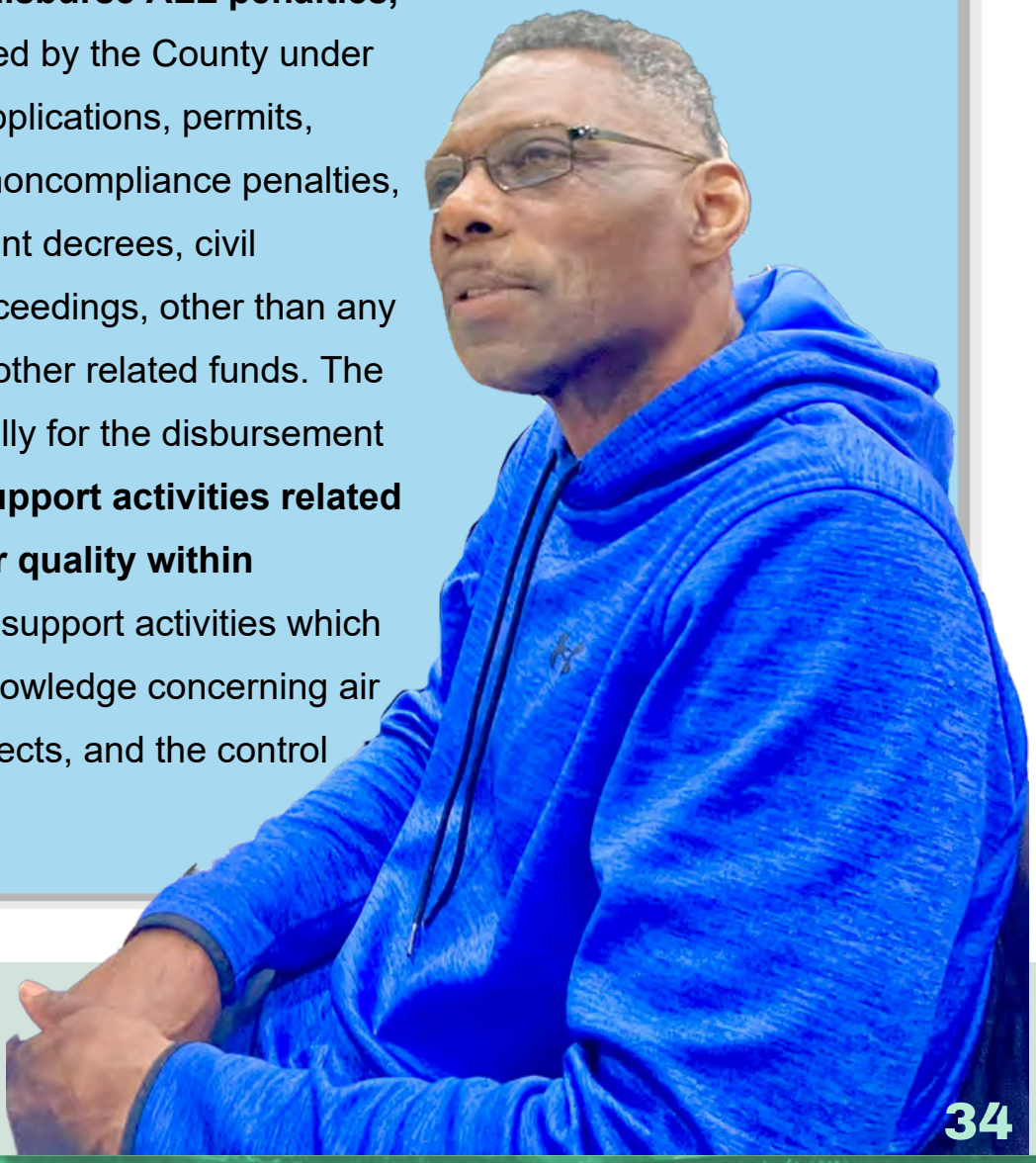
- **ARTICLE 21 (XXI) -** RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE ALLEGHENY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, AIR POLLUTION CONTROL, AND ALLEGHENY COUNTY COUNCIL

Community Benefit Trust

A majority of the fines from the 2018 Clairton fire and major emission violations were being put into the U.S. Steel Community Benefit Trust Fund, which was supposed to be a resident-governed board composed of one community representative from each of the five communities affected. These **communities: Clairton, Glassport, Liberty, Lincoln, and Port Vue** met quarterly from 2021 to 2024 with one special meeting in 2025. Even though this trust is named “Community Benefit,” it is not being delegated for community benefit, as expressed in a public meeting. This fund was used much more like a “Slush Fund” for municipalities rather than a fund that could address the many community needs expressed in response to the fire.

Clean Air Fund

The purpose of the **"Allegheny County Clean Air Fund" is to receive and disburse ALL penalties, fines, and interest** received by the County under this Article as a result of applications, permits, licenses, consent orders, noncompliance penalties, civil penalty actions, consent decrees, civil penalties, or summary proceedings, other than any fees, related interest, and other related funds. The Clean Air Fund is specifically for the disbursement of such **funds solely to support activities related to the improvement of air quality within Allegheny County** and to support activities which will increase or improve knowledge concerning air pollution, its causes, its effects, and the control thereof.



Edgar Thomson Public Settlement

In March 2025, U.S. Steel was ordered to pay $6.1 million to settle a class-action lawsuit regarding dust and other noxious emissions from its Edgar Thomson facility in North Braddock.

The complaint filed in 2022 stated, “(U.S. Steel) owes and continues to owe a duty to the public to prevent and abate the interference with and the invasion of the free use and enjoyment of public air and spaces by emitting fugitive dust and noxious odors into the ambient air.”

According to the settlement agreement, here’s how that money will be spent:

- $1.5 million will be paid out to those who opt in, which includes a $5,000 payment to lead plaintiff Alyssa Finley. Residents who opted in received a settlement check for $912.
- $2.25 million will be used to build two wheel wash stations to clean vehicles exiting the facility
- $1.6 million will be used to pave the on-site street informally known as Burma Road
- $740,000 will be used to purchase two street sweepers for use at - and in the vicinity of - the Edgar Thomson facility.

To no one’s surprise, U.S. Steel did not hold up its end of the bargain and gave people pennies in exchange for their suffering. Additionally, some residents had settlement checks bounce when they went to deposit them.


Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

MAY 17, 2022 9:19 AM

U.S. Steel to pay $1.5 million over pollution at Edgar Thomson Works

Alexandra Wimley/Post-Gazette

EJ DICTIONARY:

- **Fugitive Emissions** are defined as the unintentional and undesirable emission, leakage, or discharge of gases or vapors from pressure-containing equipment or facilities, and from components inside an industrial plant such as valves, piping flanges, pumps, storage tanks, compressors, etc.

Allegheny County Health Department receives 5% of the Clean Air Funds

ACHD receives 5% of the Clean Air Funds for its operational costs to distribute Clean Air funds and implement the work needed to reduce pollution. Many industries are currently operating without a permit and make billions in profits, so it's only fair to have polluters pay their share of the tax.

No matter how big the fine amount, it will never be more valuable than our health! #StopPayToPollute

Fund	Funder	Amount	Source	How it was spent
Mon Valley Public Health Fund	Allegheny County Economic Development *(facilitated by Jefferson Regio Foundation)*	$42 Million *(U.S Steel to also spend $38 Million in facility upgrades & shut down leaking batteries)*	Class action lawsuit	• **$160,000** for programs addressing food insecurity in the Mon Valley • **$81,000** for Indoor Air Quality improvements • **$80,000** for green space improvements • **$79,000** for elevating community programming and support
Community Benefit Trust		Total spent $$	90% of outstanding penalties and christmas fines *(expired in 2025)*	• Security cameras • Municipal building renovations and upgrades • Electrical equipment for municipalities including police cars and garabage trucks • 2024 • Borough of Port Vue
Clean Air Fund	Allegheny County Health Department	Varies by fine collection	Pollution penalties, fines, and interest	• $200,000 for upgrades to their **Recreation Center** • $5.902 for **street reconstruction** for water and drainage issues • $3,500 for **Free Library** Refurbish Project • $54,824 for **Municipal complex Renovations** • $25,049 for Self-Contained **Breathing Apparatus** (from remaining 2023 funds) • $6,717 for Two **Police Body Camera** (from remaining 2023 funds) • $6,343 for Police replacement computer/server (from remaining 2023 funds) • $29,978 for Fire Squad (from remaining 2023 funds) • Borough of Glassport • $10,918 forthe **Emergency Demolition** of 714 Detroit Avenue • $27,249 for **retaining wall** in Lemon Alley • $45,042 for Renovations to the **new Municipal Complex.Electric equipment for different boroughs** • **Sharpsburg Borough was just awarded $1,000,000 in 2024 to install solar panels and battery storage at their borough buildings and continue operations during a power outage.** • **Swissvale Borough was awarded $800,000 to replace a diesel-powered street sweeper** • **Air quality reporting & analysis** • **Many trees!**



We Must Fight for a Cleaner and Healthier Future

Progress does feel slow, but thanks to community advocacy groups across the nation, we have seen that change is possible. We can create a future that has cleaner air and produces **REAL LONG-TERM JOBS** that benefit the community.

To protect our overall community health, organizers are advocating for:

- Municipalities connecting to the community monitoring network for instant notifications to residents
- Residents want to be notified by our County when the air is bad
- Supplying residents living near pollution with air filters
- Update old (20-70 years old) industrial equipment that leaks cancerous toxins.

If polluters won't be held accountable, communities must use our collective power and our votes to demand change: **Clean Up or Shut Down**. Clean air is a human right. No one should have a shorter life or lower quality of life because of the ZIP code they call home. Join us and help continue the fight for healthy air and healthy communities.

Ways to get involved



1. **Hold industries and elected officials accountable for harmful pollution**
   - Follow and support local Environmental Justice organizations
   - Attend a local environmental justice meeting to learn about more local issues and actions
   - Donate to local organizations that are fighting for clean air and healthier communities
2. **Tell decision-makers to protect our right to clean air**
   - Support frontline monitoring policies for major polluting facilities
   - Attend community meetings and public hearings to share your concerns and hold decision-makers accountable
   - Meet with elected officials and advocate for clean air policies
3. **Connect with frontline residents to fight and protect in solidarity**
   - Share this information with a neighbor
   - Submit comments to the Smell PGH app
   - Rally with us at future actions to make our voices heard
   - Join 412 Justice's monthly Environmental Justice meetings to stay updated

"If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair."
- Shirley Chisholm

Community Resources

- Breathe Project - breatheproject.org -Breath Cam & Pollution Map
- Allegheny County Health Department - alleghenycounty.us
  - Air Pollution Complaints & Alert System
- Carnegie Mellon University CREATE Lab - cmucreatelab.org , Smell Pittsburgh - smellpgh.org (App-based air reporting)
- PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center - Policy Info environmentamerica.org/pennsylvania
- ROCIS (Reducing Outdoor Contaminants in Indoor Spaces) - Indoor Air Monitoring - rocis.org
- UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh Pediatric Asthma Center - i4kids.org/asthma
- Women for Healthy for Environment - womenforahealthyenvironment.org Whole Home Assesments for Lead, Radon, and Air
- Valley Clean Air Now (VCAN) - valleycleanair.com - Clairton, PA FREE Air Filter Distribution
- Conservation Voters of PA - conservationpa.org - Political Education
- Group Against Smog and Pollution (GASP) - gasp-pgh.org - Environmental Data & Policy
- American Lung Assoc. (PA) - lung.org - Public Health Info
- PennFuture - pennfuture.org - Research & Policy
- North Braddock Residents For Our Future - nbrfof.org - Community based Organization
- DEP Southwest Regional Office - dep.pa.gov - State Governing Body
- EPA PA - epa.gov/pa - Federal Governing Body
- Air Now - airnow.gov - Air Quality Data



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