

A Community Meeting About Air Quality in Lawrenceville

Mar. 13, 2019 | 6:00-7:30 PM

AGENDA:

1. Welcome (5 min)

Jenna Date of Lawrenceville Clean Air Now (LCAN) and Dave Breingan, Executive Director of Lawrenceville United

2. Presentation (30 min)

Rachel Filippini, Executive Director of Group Against Smog and Pollution (GASP)

50th anniversary, local group for Pittsburgh, work to improve air quality in western PA

Legal work, policy-making, education

FAST FACTS

- Pittsburgh is in the top 10 for most polluted cities in the nation in regard to year-round particle pollution
- Allegheny County ranks in the top 2% of counties in the US for cancer risk from air pollution
- From 2014-16, four regional air monitors registered particulate matter (PM2.5) concentrations worse than 90% of the US
- In 2016, 7 out of 10 monitors

Why is GASP still around?

- Air pollution makes people sick, ruins quality of life, shortens lives
- Can impact moving in to region for people / companies
- Do young people want to stay in the city after college if the air quality is poor?

Air Pollution is a significant US public health concern

- EPA says every year 20 million school/work days are lost due to air pollution
- Excess mortality of 125,000 deaths / year
- Allegheny county not meeting requirements for sulfur dioxide
- Nearly 3000 studies since 2016 on the health impact of air pollution

Six criteria for air pollutants

1. Carbon monoxide
2. Lead
3. Nitrogen dioxide

4. Ozone: depending on the molecule's elevation, it can either be crucial in preventing skin cancer or it can exacerbate asthma, reduce respiratory efficiency, and scar lung tissue. Problematic if in lower stratosphere and inhaled
5. Particulate matter: fine particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter. Produced by combustion. WHO doesn't think EPA requirements are stringent enough. Need to get it below EPA requirement
6. Sulphur dioxide: SO₂: gas with a pungent odor like striking a match. Reacts easily with other substances to form harmful compounds, such as sulfuric acid, sulfurous acid, and sulfate particulates. Wheezing, shortness of breath

Particulate matter continued

- Larger particulate less than 10 microns – asthma
- Less than 1 micron – cancer, gets into brain
- Sources – diesel vehicles, power plants, wood smoke, cooking in restaurants, factory

Ozone continued

- Sources – oil and gas, biogenic sources, on-road vehicles, off-road engines, non-road engines, area sources, point sources; formed and becomes problematic when heat is applied
- Health concerns - Asthma, scar lung tissue

Top Air Toxics in our region – not regulated or monitored! We don't know the health impacts

- Arsenic compounds,
- chromium compounds,
- coke oven emissions,
- carbon tetrachloride
- Formaldehyde
- Diesel particulate matter
- Benzene
- 1, 3-Butadiene

Health impacts

- Breathing in air pollution can make it more likely to get infections
- Asthma – recent study 23% prevalence rate which is higher than 10% in PA as a whole; many parents didn't know their children had asthma
- Cardiovascular health – air pollution can have a role in development of issues, especially particulate matter
- Cancer – lung cancer and bladder cancer, ultrafine particles get into bloodstream IARC called outdoor air pollution a carcinogen, particulate matter is a carcinogen
- Brain – dementia, neurodegenerative disorder such as stroke
- Especially vulnerable – elderly, children, underlying health conditions like cardiovascular, occupations who work with that equipment, athletes (better to run on side streets or not during rush hour), live near a source

Tools

- Breathe Project – pulls together academia, physicians, local groups, state groups, grassroots groups
 - Breathe meter – way to rank Pittsburgh’s air compared to other cities, only particulate matter, e.g. Pittsburgh 7.2% NYC 47%
- Gasp website: Air Permits Clearinghouse
 - Can see operating permit including allowable amounts of pollutants

Local Sources of Air Pollution

McConway and Torley Foundry in Lawrenceville

- Synthetic minor source of carbon monoxide and a minor source of many other things
- Fence-line monitor in place since April 2011 – Lawrenceville Air Toxic Metals Study.
- ACHD has committed to keeping that monitor up.
- Facility receiving operating permit in late 2018
- Manganese levels have been concerning in the past but now below 50 which is the most stringent requirement
- Want to make sure that the ACHD looks at the data
 - Data is concerning with spikes, why is this occurring?

Pressure Chemical

- Synthetic minor source of volatiles organic compounds (VOC) and hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) and a minor source of all other criteria pollutants
- Renewal is open for public comment until March 26, 2019
- Named in the toxic ten for Allegheny county (8th most pollutant)

Sunoco

- Title V permit is currently in draft, renewal date was 2015.
- Major source of VOCs

Diesel particulate matter

- One of the greatest inhaled air toxics cancer risk in the region
- Emission at ground level
- Concentrated dose where you are breathing
- Can only idle 5 minutes per hour
- Buses can idle for up to 15 minutes during a 60-minute period when passengers are onboard
- Occupational exposure
- Heats up atmosphere and impacts climate

Pittsburgh Clean Construction Diesel Operations legislation

- Legislation amended and passed in July 2016
- Went into effect Oct 1 2016
- First city project will break ground in May in Duck Hollow
- Only applies to city projects at least \$2.5 million

Regulatory Agencies

EPA

- Clean Air Act through rulemaking
- Set standards for air quality
- Funds states / locals to implement rules and meet standards
- Responsible for technology to measure pollution

ACHD air program

- Measure air quality
- Regulate and permit pollution sources
- Implement federal rules
- Develop plans to meet NAAQS (national ambient air quality standards)
- Track emissions
- Monitoring graphs available on website – ACHD hourly ambient air data

What can you do?

- Smell PGH app developed by Carnegie Mellon University's CREATE Lab, which allows you to report foul odors directly to the ACHD
- Allegheny County Health Department every time you smell a foul odor or when you see thick smoke coming from industry, call
- Sign up for Allegheny Alerts -> notifications. Choose to get alerts by text, phone call, emails. Many choices, sign up for health alerts.
- Citizen science – air monitoring. Personal Air Monitor (PAM), Flow, Purple Air, AQ Trex, can give you information about trends
- Make your voice heard
 - Write letters to the editor
 - Speak at public hearings including board of health
 - Discuss with your city/county council person, state/federal rep
 - Discuss with your friends and family
 - Talk with your physician
 - Do your part to reduce your own emissions
 - Become a member of GASP

3. Q & A (15 min)

Have a question or concern? Write it on an index card, raise your hand, and an LCAN member will collect it and put it in the queue for Rachel.

When there is a foul odor from M&T, what is the source?

M&T melts scrap steel, pour it into molds, grind, involve chemicals and ovens. Don't know where the smell is coming from but guess is grinding and welding since it is metallic. Have non-odor term on lease. Not supposed to have any odor outside of the property line. Call it in

Are there efforts to transition buses and school buses to cleaner fuel?
Diesel particulate filters on the bus has been helpful. Electric bus technology is available. PAT exploring getting more electric buses. Need infrastructure in place to

Does PC have an air monitor?

They call report. EPA has compromised, if you are big enough, yes. PC reports based on a full day of production. Lawrenceville has large monitor on 39th street

4. Break out sessions (20 min)

Everyone! This is your chance to talk in small groups about what brought you here tonight, and what you'd like LCAN to work on going forward. Industrial pollution? Traffic pollution? Public health? Air monitors? Advocacy? Community education? Something else?

ROCIS – air monitor

Sat April 13 2pm next LCAN meeting

Tree Pittsburgh – free street tree. Takes CO2 out from traffic. Leaves catch some of the particulate matter. Traffic goes slower when there are trees

5. Wrap-up/Next steps (20 min)

The small groups will report back so we all have a sense of LCAN's possible next steps.