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Contact: Debra Smit, Breathe Project  
[dsmit@breatheproject.org](mailto:dsmit@breatheproject.org), 412-760-7677

**Clairton Residents, Environmental Groups To Testify TONIGHT at Allegheny County Health Dept. Hearing on U.S. Steel's Clairton Coke Works Legacy of Pollution**

**Pittsburgh, Pa.** – Clairton residents and environmental advocates will raise concerns regarding relentless, unhealthy air pollution at an **IN PERSON** Allegheny County Health Dept. (ACHD) public hearing on the U.S. Steel Clairton Coke Works Title V permit.

**The hearing will be held:**

**6 p.m. TONIGHT, Feb. 22, 2022**

**Clairton Municipal Building, 551 Ravensburg Blvd., Clairton, 15025**

*The hearing will also stream live on [ACHD's Facebook](#) page.*

The hearing will specifically address the long-overdue [Clairton Coke Works Title V Operating Renewal Application](#). The Coke Works Title V was issued by [ACHD on March 27, 2012](#) and expired on March 26, 2017. Among the concerns that will be raised:

- The Clairton Coke works is the largest coke plant in the U.S. and has been a major source of unhealthy air pollution in our region for decades.
- Nearly 90% of the point source cancer risk estimated in Allegheny County is attributable to coke oven emissions, with 90% of those emissions coming from the Clairton facility. ([Cancer Risk in Allegheny County, Pa.](#), May 2021)
- Pittsburgh ranks as one of the top 10 most polluted cities in the nation from year-round particle pollution. ([American Lung Association, 2021](#))
- Feb. 22, 2022, marks the 19th day (out of 53 days in 2022) that our airshed was in the top-10 worst for air quality in the U.S. and the 7th day our airshed was ranked #1 worst for at least a portion of the day so far in 2022. ([EPA Air Now, 2022](#))
- Medical professionals in Clairton report evidence of children with higher rates of respiratory distress and asthma because of this pollution, nearly three-times the national average.

- The Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) has fined U.S. Steel over \$1.73 million for penalties associated with emissions violations since April 2019, the time that the Coke Works fire episode was “fixed.” ([ACHD Enforcement Orders for USS Clairton Coke Works](#))
- The Allegheny County Health Department has issued at least 13 enforcement orders and notices of violation to the U.S. Steel Clairton Coke Works since April 2019, the time that the Coke Works fire episode was “fixed.” ([ACHD Enforcement Orders for USS Clairton Coke Works](#))

Clairton residents and environmental groups will ask that ACHD issue a Title V permit that ceases to allow U.S. Steel to continue the decades-long legacy of pollution problems at the U.S. Steel Clairton Coke Works and give the community clean and healthy air to breathe.

“I have a simple ask: that ACHD simply follow its mission statement 'to protect, promote and preserve the health and well being of ALL Allegheny County residents particularly the most vulnerable' or change the mission statement,” said Germaine Patterson, Clairton resident.

“Fenceline community members are requesting that ACHD guarantees that the U.S. Steel Title V permit addresses that all people in the region – including the young, old and vulnerable – are able to go outside and open their windows 24/7, 365 days a year,” says Edith Abeyta, a longtime Braddock resident and member of North Braddock Residents for Our Future. “We no longer want the air outside and in our homes to be detrimental to our health because of pollutants released by Clairton Coke Works.”

“We look forward to showing up and being there to support our friends and neighbors in the Mon Valley living with air pollution from the mill, as well as to speak to an issue that has long been a concern: ongoing hydrogen sulfide exceedances,” said Patrick Campbell, GASP executive director. “The state’s 24-hour average H<sub>2</sub>S standard was exceeded on 54 days last year at the Liberty monitor, and as if to prove our point, concentrations were so high today that by 9 a.m. an exceedance was guaranteed. ACHD needs to address this issue - and has an opportunity to with this permit.”

“The history of paying quarterly fines instead of reducing emission violations indicates a willingness of U.S. Steel to operate the Clairton Coke Works in a “pay to pollute” relationship with ACHD,” stated Matthew Mehalik, executive director of the Breathe Project. “U.S. Steel is paying approximately \$217,000 per quarter in fines because of ongoing emissions violations at the USS Clairton Coke Works since April 2019, the time that US Steel claimed they fixed problems at the Coke Works and since the time ACHD signed a settlement agreement with U.S. Steel in June of 2019.”

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