

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 23, 2024

CONTACT

Debra Smit, Breathe Project
dsmit@breatheproject.org

ACHD Seeks Public Comment on Revised Title V Permit for U.S. Steel's Edgar Thomson Facility – TONIGHT, Sept. 23, 2024 at 6 p.m.

The Allegheny County Health Dept. will hold a **public hearing** for a REVISED Title V Permit for the U.S. Steel Edgar Thomson Facility. Residents and environmental groups are expected to testify about their struggle to live in the midst of this highly polluting plant. An earlier hearing for this permit was held on June 22, 2022. Subsequent lawsuits, revisions, and EPA intervention resulted in the need for this latest hearing.

Monday, September 23, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.
Greater Valley Community Services
300 Holland Avenue
Braddock, PA 15104

“The U.S. Steel Edgar Thomson Plant needs a quality permit that allows ACHD to hold the plant accountable to emissions limits so that people in Braddock and the Mon Valley stop having to endure harms from toxic air pollution,” stated Matthew Mehalik, Executive Director of the Breathe Project. “Too many have been harmed for too long.”

BACKGROUND

The Edgar Thomson Title V operating permit has been contested for some time. The current conditions and permit were issued on April 13, 2016. Such permits are supposed to be renewed every five years under the Title V program. The permit expired in April of 2021. On November 9, 2017, EPA Issued a Notice of Violation to Edgar Thomson for “multiple visible emissions limits” among other violations. The plant was under joint EPA and Department of Justice investigation. This investigation preempted any progress on updating the expired permit. The investigation resulted in a consent order in June 2022 that fined U.S. Steel \$1.5 million in penalties and fines and required 3rd party evaluators with 24/7 cameras to audit the operations at Edgar Thomson, because U.S. Steel's environmental performance for operating the plant was abysmal, under federal judge supervision. This Consent Order cleared the way for updating the Title V Operating permit, which involved a public hearing on June 29, 2022.

While that permit was issued by the Allegheny County Dept. of Health on Aug. 1, 2023, objections by both U.S. Steel resulted in weaker permit requirements. [Environmental groups petitioned the EPA](#) because the updated draft “did not include monitoring and testing requirements sufficient to assure compliance with multiple air quality emissions limitations for multiple emissions sources, and improperly eliminated certain emissions limitations.”

On February 7, 2024, the EPA granted the petitioner's requests and required that the Title V be revised. Hence, a second public comment period.

The EPA is calling for substantial changes, which environmental groups are supporting. GASP outlines these changes in their [blog post here](#). In addition, technical points will be further outlined by EIP and Clean Air Council and shared prior to the hearing.

This second hearing highlights a failure in local leadership, especially at the Allegheny County Health Dept. Our air quality program is broken and needs to be fixed. New board members and air quality advisory committee members should be appointed who are committed to protecting people's health.

##