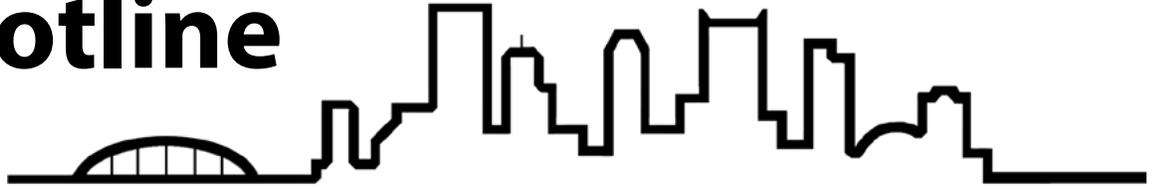




Group Against Smog and Pollution, Inc. Hotline



Spring 2015

www.gasp-pgh.org

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Permits for Major Sources of Air Pollution in Southwest PA Now Easily Accessible

by John Baillie, GASP Staff Attorney, and Jamin Bogi, GASP Policy & Outreach Coordinator

GASP has made the operating permits for "Major Sources" of air pollution in southwestern PA easily accessible with our new Air Permits Clearinghouse on the GASP website. While these documents are available to the public, they generally can only be obtained through facility-specific agency file review requests—a time-consuming, often intimidating process. These important documents should be readily accessible, so that anyone can learn more about large sources of air pollution in a given region, including the amount and types of pollutants sources are permitted to emit and which pollution control measures are (or are not) in place.

Major Sources

Title V of the Clean Air Act requires Major Sources of air pollution to obtain operating permits from either the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or a state or local agency that EPA has authorized to issue Title V Operating Permits. Major Sources located in Allegheny County are permitted by the Allegheny County Health Department. Major Sources located in surrounding counties are permitted by the PA Department of Environmental Protection.

A Major Source emits or has the potential to emit at least one hundred tons per

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How One Company Affects Lawrenceville's Air Quality

by Jamin Bogi, GASP Policy & Outreach Coordinator

The McConway & Torley facility in Pittsburgh's Lawrenceville neighborhood is a steel foundry that produces railcar couplings. Activities at the plant include steel melting, mold-making, and casting. Air pollution from these activities includes particulate matter, benzene, manganese, and other pollutants which not only are likely causing or contributing to foul odors but are harming public health. Particulate matter can cause or exacerbate asthma and lead to premature death in individuals with heart and lung disease. Benzene is a carcinogen for which there is no known safe exposure level. Manganese is a neurotoxin, and excessive manganese

exposure can cause cognitive impairment, mood disturbances, and impaired memory, balance, and coordination.

GASP's concerns about emissions from McConway & Torley are not new. In 2010, ACHD was preparing to allow the company to reactivate an electric arc furnace. As part of this process, ACHD performed air dispersion modeling that indicated that manganese concentrations beyond the facility fence line exceeded the "IRIS" value, which is the long-term health-based exposure level developed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). As a

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Group Against Smog and Pollution, Inc. (GASP) is a nonprofit citizens group in southwestern Pennsylvania working for a healthy, sustainable environment. Founded in 1969, GASP has been a diligent watchdog, educator, litigator, and policy maker on many environmental issues, with a focus on air quality in the Pittsburgh region.

GASP Legal Update

by Joe Osborne, GASP Legal Director

The following is a sampling of GASP legal staff projects that are ongoing or recently concluded:

3/30/2015	Comments to West Virginia DEP regarding Class II General Permit G80-A - Natural Gas Production, Compressor and/or Dehydration Facilities
3/26/2015	Panel Presentation on Pipeline Safety, Health, and Regulation, League of Women Voters of the Oberlin Area
3/17/2015	Comments to USEPA regarding proposed revision to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone
3/16/2015	Public Meeting regarding Minor Source Operating Permit #0275 - McConway & Torley, 109 48th Street Pittsburgh, PA 15201-2755
3/2/2015	Comments to ACHD regarding Title V Operating Permit #0060 - Neville Chemical Company, 2800 Neville Road, Neville Township, PA 15225
3/2/2015	Comments to ACHD regarding Title V Operating Permit Renewal #0050 - US Steel Irvin Works, Camp Hollow Road, West Mifflin, PA 15222
3/2/2015	Comments to ACHD regarding Title V Operating Permit #0044 - Pittsburgh Allegheny Co. Thermal, LTD, 120 Cecil Way, Pittsburgh, PA 15222
2/24/2015	Comments to Pennsylvania DEP regarding Air Quality Plan Approval 65-00990C - Tenaska Pennsylvania Partners, LLC Westmoreland Generating Station, South Huntingdon Township, Westmoreland County
1/6/2015	Comments to Pennsylvania DEP regarding Air Quality General Permit 5 - Natural Gas Production and/or Processing Facilities
12/15/2014	Comments to Pennsylvania DEP regarding proposed permit modification TV61-00198B - Handsome Lake Energy LLC (HLE) Kennerdell facility, 173 Cornplanter Lane, Kennerdell, PA 16374
11/12/2014	Comments to ACHD regarding Title V Operating Permit #0015 - Liberty Pultrusions, 1575 Lebanon School Road, West Mifflin, PA 15122

The **Hotline** is the semiannual newsletter of the Group Against Smog and Pollution.

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GASP Mission Statement

The Group Against Smog and Pollution works to improve air quality to ensure human, environmental, and economic health.

Methods of Achieving Mission

GASP is a citizens' group based in Southwestern PA which focuses on environmental issues in the surrounding region. When pertinent to these concerns, we participate in state and national environmental decisions.

We believe in the public's right to receive accurate and thorough information on these issues and to actively participate in the decision making process.

To achieve our environmental goals on behalf of our membership, GASP will advocate, educate, serve as an environmental watchdog, mobilize action, and litigate when necessary.

We will work both independently and in cooperation with like-minded individuals and groups as determined by the Board of Directors.

We will uphold GASP's reputation for scientific integrity, honesty, and responsible involvement.

Air Permits Clearinghouse

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year of any air pollutant, ten tons per year of any single Hazardous Air Pollutant, or twenty-five tons per year of any combination of Hazardous Air Pollutants. A Major Source's Title V Operating Permit is like a snapshot that includes all emissions limits and standards to which the source is subject, as well as all operating, monitoring, and reporting requirements that apply, at the time of the permit's issuance.

By including all the requirements in one comprehensive document, Title V Operating Permits help source operators comply with such requirements, and they help regulators (and when necessary, members of the public) enforce them—all with the ultimate goal of reducing air pollution.

We have also located all of the sources on a map, making it easier to get a good picture of what sources are in a particular area. Find the Air Permits Clearinghouse and the maps here: <http://www.gasp-pgh.org/projects/air-permits/> 

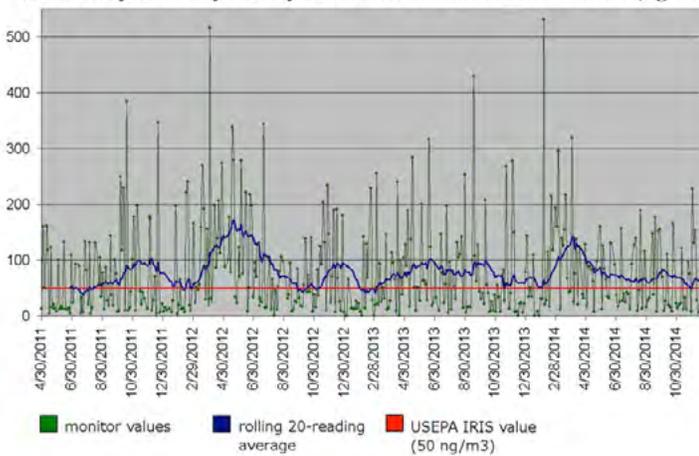
Lawrenceville Air Quality

continued from page 1

result, ACHD installed an air pollution monitor at the fence line. In addition, McConway & Torley agreed to install more effective pollution controls as part of a settlement agreement with GASP.

The fence line monitor has now operated for nearly 4 years. Average manganese concentrations at the monitor continue to exceed the USEPA IRIS level. Further, there has been no appreciable improvement in monitored manganese concentrations over the course of the nearly 4-year monitoring. From 4/30/11 to 12/19/14, the manganese concentration has averaged 57% higher than the IRIS level, with short-term spikes much higher. See the monitor results here: http://www.achd.net/air/pubs/pdf/032715_Lawrenceville-ToxicMetals.pdf

ACHD monitored ambient air manganese concentrations at McConway & Torley facility fenceline. 4/30/2011 - 12/19/2014 (ng/m³)



Not only have manganese levels proven to be a concern, but many other facility emissions likely have been underestimated. In the past, ACHD had allowed facilities to reduce calculated emissions of certain pollutants if those pollutants were released inside a building. The assumption was that the building itself would contain and control those emissions to some extent. In 2014 ACHD reexamined that procedure,

and in its own words, found the procedure “to have no technical basis to reference.” In its operating permit application, McConway & Torley had applied a 50% building control reduction to its emission calculations for releases within the facility. Consistent with the revised policy, the Department removed the 50% building reduction and corrected several other emissions underestimations in McConway & Torley's application.

Based on the revised calculations and McConway & Torley's current allowable production levels, the facility would be regulated as a “major source” under the Clean Air Act. In order for the plant to remain eligible for the minor source operating permit for which it had applied, ACHD reduced McConway & Torley's allowed production levels to 21,250 tons of steel melted per year. This limit will result in a substantial reduction in emissions from the facility. For many years, McConway & Torley has benefited from incorrect emission calculation assumptions. ACHD has taken a strong step to protect the public health by correcting its own mistaken assumptions.

McConway & Torley has already appealed ACHD's change in policy. Due to the request of GASP and others, ACHD held a public hearing on April 14 to take comments on the permit from people directly. Over thirty people delivered comments and the hearing room was filled beyond capacity. GASP and others urged ACHD to stick to its guns and protect people who live and work in Lawrenceville and beyond. McConway & Torley must either operate according to ACHD's draft permit with corrected emissions estimates and production limits or invest in better pollution controls for its plant, and ACHD must continue to monitor pollution levels at its fence line to make sure the facility's emissions do not create excessive air pollution in Lawrenceville and nearby communities. Soon, we will know if ACHD modifies the permit in any way due to comments from the public and the company. Please check GASP's web site and make sure you are signed up for our emails to stay updated on this important issue.



The Fight for Clean Air Continues on Neville Island

by John Baillie, GASP Staff Attorney

Shenango, Inc. operates a battery of coke ovens on Neville Island. We periodically check Shenango's compliance with limitations on the sulfur content of its coke oven gas, on visible emissions from the door areas of its coke ovens, and on visible emissions from its battery combustion stack.

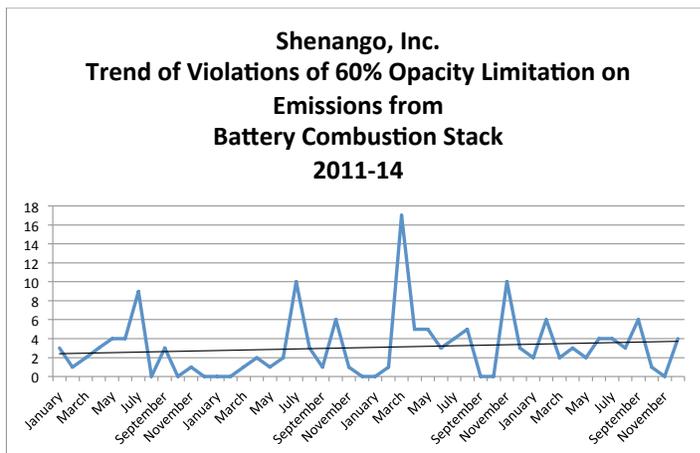
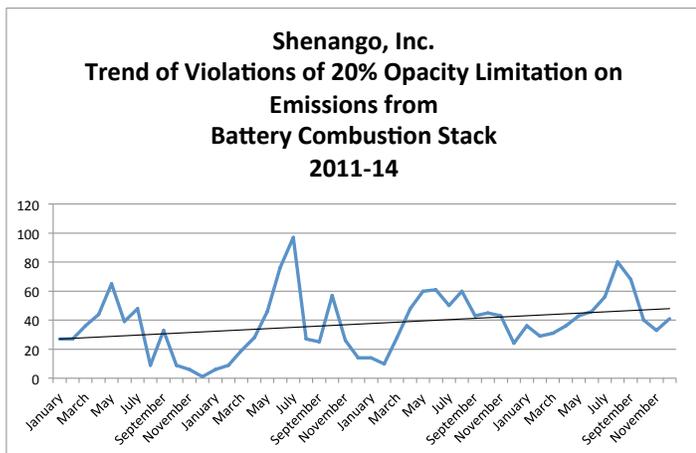
Shenango reported no violations of the limitation on the sulfur content of its coke oven gas during the fourth quarter of 2014. Shenango has not had a calendar quarter without a violation of that limitation since the fourth quarter of 2012.

Shenango reported only one violation of a limitation that prohibits visible emissions from more than five percent of the coke oven doors during the fourth quarter of 2014. However, ACHD's inspectors observed an additional three violations of that limitation during the fourth quarter. Similarly, in the second and third quarters of 2014, ACHD's inspectors observed two and six violations, respectively, while Shenango reported no violations in the second quarter and one violation in the third (previously, in our blog posts, we incorrectly omitted the violations that ACHD observed). Shenango undertook steps on its own to address such violations in recent years and they have reduced the number of violations, but have not eliminated them.

During the fourth quarter of 2014, Shenango reported numerous violations of both applicable limitations on visible emissions from its battery combustion stack: the limitation that prohibits emissions that have 20% or more opacity for more than three minutes in any one-hour period, and the limitation that prohibits emissions that have 60% or more opacity at any time. The graphs below show that Shenango's violations of those limitations have continued at an increasing rate in recent years despite government enforcement actions in 2012 and 2014. The black diagonal lines in the graphs are trend lines that we generated using Microsoft Excel:

In May 2014, GASP filed a citizen suit against Shenango in the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania, seeking a court order which would force Shenango to stop violating the limitations on visible emissions from its coke oven door areas and battery combustion stack. Shenango argued that GASP's suit should be dismissed because a Consent Order and Agreement that Shenango entered into with ACHD in April 2014 and a Consent Decree between Shenango, ACHD, and the United States Department of Environmental Protection that became effective in November 2012 are "diligent prosecutions" of Shenango's violations – in order to avoid duplicative litigation, a citizen suit brought under the Clean Air Act may be dismissed if the responsible regulator "is diligently prosecuting a civil action in a court of the United States or a State to require compliance" with the same limitations that are at issue in the citizen suit.

Shenango was successful at the District Court level. On March 26, 2015, the court dismissed GASP's claims, finding that the 2014 and 2012 enforcement actions were "diligently prosecuted" because they were not "totally unsatisfactory." GASP has appealed the dismissal of its claims to the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. We believe that no matter how "diligently prosecuted," a government enforcement action "requires compliance" within the meaning of the Clean Air Act only if it ends violations, not if it allows them to continue, and we are fighting to make sure that is the law. Stay tuned. 



Pittsburgh Air Quality Activists Meet with EPA Administrator

by Ted Popovich, GASP Board Member

Allegheny County Clean Air Now (ACCAN) is a grassroots organization founded in part by two GASP board members. ACCAN members recently met with Shawn Garvin, EPA Region 3 Administrator, to voice complaints about the DTE Shenango coke plant. Shawn Garvin brought eight staff people to the meeting, all of whom listened very intently to our comments.

ACCAN members took turns sharing their concerns. Kathleen Krebs delivered over 1000 signed petitions requesting stronger EPA oversight and talked about the major effort to secure those signatures. Leah and Don Andrascik spoke about fears they have for their two young sons living at ground zero for pollution coming from Shenango. Angelo Taranto said we were emissaries for many who could not make the trip and told some of their stories. Savannah Pailioz talked about how unbearable the smell was when she canvassed in ACCAN neighborhoods. Karen Grzywinski cited her many years living in the shadow of the Shenango plant and how terribly frustrated residents are who feel they are not being heard. Ted Popovich said ACCAN members live in sacrificial communities where they are forced to breathe in toxic emissions which cause chronic illnesses and premature death.



Tom Hoffman presents Shawn Garvin with Naomi Klein's new book about climate change and capitalism, *This Changes Everything*. The book was signed by all ACCAN members who were present.

Shawn Garvin committed to visiting the ACCAN communities in Pittsburgh and to share the reports from EPA inspection visits made the previous week to the Shenango and Clairton coke works. We were asked to submit smoke reading reports directly to the EPA Region 3 office. 

GASP in Action



In December, Rachel Filippini was a panelist on the Particle Falls Artist Lecture and Panel Discussion hosted by the Office of Public Art. There she and other local experts talked about our region's air pollution problems, while Particle Falls creator Andrea Polli discussed the process and technology behind Particle Falls and other projects that reflect her pioneering work at the intersection of art and science.

Spotlight on a GASP Board Member

Roger Day, along with his wife Abby Resnick, are GASP's two newest board members. Roger initially joined GASP through his friendship with Maren Cooke, another board member. As many East Enders do, they had met in Frick Park where, as Roger recalls, "apparently the siren song of my tuba pulled her irresistibly along the wooded paths."

Roger is a statistician, with training in Biostatistics at Harvard School of Public Health (ScD), with a focus on Cancer Biology and Clinical Trials. He also holds a BA and MA in Mathematics, Wesleyan University.

He ran the Biostatistics Department at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute for 14 years. Some of his research touched on lung cancer, including work on clinical trials, molecular markers, DNA repair, and genetics. Roger recounts, "Back in the dark ages I did a little community epidemiology study, to investigate a possible cancer cluster."

Although ostensibly retired, Roger continues to teach at the University of Pittsburgh. His post-retirement work is varied, but some focuses on trying to make clinical trials more relevant to patients' needs. He's a self-admitted "sucker for software development" and, from time to time, consults for ALung Technologies and other companies.

Roger is still mostly in "learning mode," but in his first year on the board became interested in a few air pollution issues that GASP hasn't dealt with previously. One is the off-gassing from sealants used in the city's road repaving program; the other is additives in gas supply lines that might appear in the household. He is following up on them but doesn't know whether these represent significant air pollution hazards for Pittsburghers.

The new rules proposed by the EPA to reduce carbon emissions from power plants led to his participation in the regional EPA citizens' meeting a few months ago, where his wife Abby testified. Many coal miners opposed the rules because of potential financial harm to them. He feels the predicament is moving and wrote an article for GASP's Hotline promoting the notion of shared societal responsibility for people, like these workers, who will suffer from the changes



that we have to make. (See Almost Heaven, Appalachia in Fall 2014 Hotline.)

Roger is an accomplished tuba player (for 45 years) and has made a second career of sorts in music performance. He plays with multiple musical groups, including Bésame, Musuhallpa, Blues Orphans, Klezlectic, Ernie Hawkins Band, and occasionally others. He also performs under the auspices of Musicians With A Mission, in nursing homes, assisted living facilities and the like, and has recorded more than a half-dozen CDs. Roger has reached the point where he can "jump into a new music situation, make the music a little better, play anything that comes to mind without effort or thinking. To me it's the ultimate freedom."

When asked if he has received any awards, he mentions that, way back in 1971, Downbeat Critics' Poll listed him as a "player deserving greater recognition, miscellaneous category."

In his personal life, two of his and Abby's three kids are active professionals in defense of the environment. The third is a historian working on the early history of relationships with Native Americans. All are musicians. On a sad note, their beloved dog, Gus, died last month after 16+ years.

As for interesting stories, Roger says that one day he'll put them all in a book called "Things I'd Better Not Tell You!" 🚲

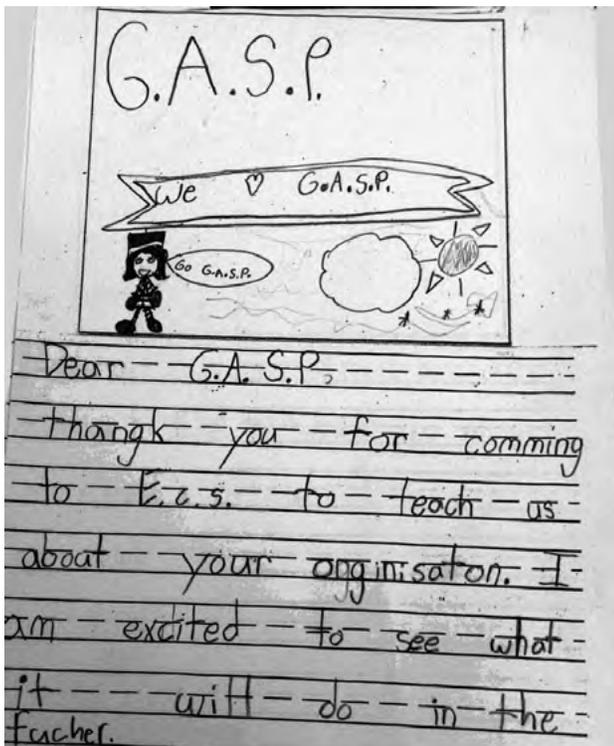
Second Graders Encourage You to Support GASP

by Marla Ferrency, GASP Board Member

This year, second graders at the Environmental Charter School (ECS) have been learning about persuasive writing. Using opinions, reasons, and examples, they began a campaign to raise money for local organizations that help people, animals and the environment. ECS teachers invited GASP staff to their classroom to be interviewed by students, who then used the power of persuasion to make a difference. According to ECS second graders:

"You need to help Group Against Smog and Pollution! We think you should help GASP in order to help our environment. GASP helps our air stay clean! They work to improve air quality to ensure human environmental and economic health. This is why you should help the Group Against Smog and Pollution!"

"GASP started in 1960 to clean our dirty Pittsburgh air. We know that GASP is helping our whole area! There are many ways to support GASP. One way is to write to politicians to change air quality laws. You can also donate money and join their membership. You can go to events or be a volunteer. If you see a violation, call Allegheny Health Department! If you can, definitely help GASP!"



"You should help to make our beautiful city of Pittsburgh healthy! We believe GASP is an organization that you should support. One reason you should support GASP is they are keeping our city clean. They make sure the air quality is healthy. They educate people about pollution. They teach people in meetings and through memberships. Those are some reasons why you should help GASP!"

Read more persuasive writing on the *ECS Make a Difference Campaign* website at <http://ecsmakeadifference.weebly.com/>



Join GASP Today!

- \$40 Grassroots Supporters (\$15 low income/student rate)
- \$60 Grassroots Contributors
- \$100 Grassroots Patrons
- \$250 Clean Air Defenders
- \$500 Clean Air Protectors
- \$_____ Other

Call GASP at (412) 924-0604 to learn about automatic monthly giving, deducted directly from your checking account or charged to your credit card. An easy, hassle-free way to support GASP all year round!

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All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Group Against Smog and Pollution, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The official registration and financial information of GASP may be obtained from the Department of State by calling 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Ready, Set—DASH!

Athletes, mark your calendars for October 31st at 9:30AM for **GASP's Clean Air Dash 5K** in the South Side along the Riverfront Trail. This year we're adding a new twist since it will be on Halloween—wear your favorite costume! Visit gasp-pgh.org for upcoming registration information.

Our event is once again being sponsored by the Heinz Endowments' Breathe Project and the University of Pittsburgh. The Clean Air Dash celebrates the progress we've made as a community in reducing air pollution and challenges all of us to continue the fight for clean air. Join us for this spooktacular event!



A group of Pitt students participated in the 2014 race. Photo by Ken Carl at KC3 Photography.



Save the Date:
Clean Air Dash 5K
October 31, 2015
9:30AM

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Group Against Smog and Pollution, Inc.



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