



## FACT SHEET ON EPA'S PROPOSED REGULATION OF INDUSTRIAL BOILERS AND PROCESS HEATERS

### Overview

- June 4, 2010: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency proposed emissions standards to control toxic air pollution from industrial boilers and process heaters. The proposed standards will yield some tangible health benefits by reducing emissions of hazardous air pollutants like mercury and lead. Not surprisingly, lobbying groups that represent polluters like chemical manufacturers, oil refiners, paper mills, plastics plants and the like are doing their best to kill, weaken, or delay these rules so their clients don't have to invest in pollution control or monitoring equipment and don't have to report their toxic emissions to EPA, state authorities, or the public.

EPA needs to hear from communities that it has done something right and that communities need the agency to hold the line against polluters' pressure.

- June 22, 2010: EPA will hold a public hearing in **Houston, TX** at the **Hilton Houston Hobby Airport** starting at **9 AM** (more details below). This hearing is a chance to tell the EPA to fully protect communities from the toxic air pollution generated by **all** boilers and process heaters.

### What are boilers and process heaters?

- Boilers: burn coal, oil, natural gas or other materials like wood to boil water and generate steam that is used to provide a facility with electricity or heat. They are common pieces of machinery and can be found at facilities like chemical plants, oil refineries, paper mills, plastics plants, steel mills, shopping malls and universities.
- Process heaters: heat raw or intermediate materials during an industrial process. For example, crude oil is heated at oil refineries in the process of creating refined products like gasoline, motor oil, and kerosene.
- Boilers and process heaters emit a range of hazardous air pollutants, including mercury, lead, dioxins, hydrogen chloride and other air toxics, all of which can significantly impact the health of people living nearby.

### The Good News

- The reductions of toxic air pollution from "major sources" will have a significant impact.
- If finalized, these rules will reduce boilers' and process heaters' emissions by:
  - 15,000 pounds per year of mercury
  - 3,200 tons per year of other toxic metals (including lead, arsenic, and chromium)
  - 722 grams per year of dioxins
  - 37,000 tons per year of hydrogen chloride
  - 50,000 tons per year of particulate matter
  - 340,000 tons per year of sulfur dioxide

- Although EPA has calculated the health benefits only for fine particulate matter and sulfur dioxide, the reductions in these pollutants alone **would prevent between 1,900 and 4,800 premature deaths every year.**
- The monetary value of these health benefits exceeds the cost to industry of the proposed regulations by **at least \$14 billion.**
- “Major source” facilities near Houston include:
  - Valero’s Houston Oil Refinery ([view Google map](#))
  - Texas Petrochemicals, LP ([view Google map](#))
  - Dow Chemical Company ([view Google map](#))

### **The Bad News**

The rule is not as strong as it should be. A major flaw in EPA’s proposed standards for boilers and process heaters leaves toxic air emissions from “[area source](#)” boilers largely unchecked, which could allow some of the dirtiest sources to continue emitting far more toxic pollution than they should. The standards for toxic organic pollutants, such as benzene – a known carcinogen – are especially weak.

### **The Takeaway**

*EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson and the Obama administration should be commended for finally proposing standards to control this significant source of unregulated toxic air pollution. Administrator Jackson needs to strengthen these standards where they are weak and to hold the line against polluter pressure to weaken them. She also needs to know that we stand with her in protecting communities’ health.*

### **Public Hearing Location and Time**

[Hilton Houston Hobby Airport](#) (click for Google map)

8181 Airport Boulevard

Houston, TX 77061

9 AM – 8 PM

The industries affected by EPA’s proposed regulations will do what they can to delay and weaken pollution controls. But as it is, these controls for boilers and process heaters are 10 years overdue. We must demand stronger rules with no delay in order to achieve the reductions in toxic air pollutants that communities across the U.S. so desperately need. Attend the public hearing to make your voice heard.

### **To Present Oral Testimony**

Contact Ms. Teresa Clemons ([clemons.teresa@epa.gov](mailto:clemons.teresa@epa.gov)) on or before June 18, 2010 with the following information: [1] Time you wish to speak (morning, afternoon, evening) [2] Rule(s) you will be commenting on [3] Name [4] Affiliation [5] Address [6] Email address [7] Phone/fax number

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