

June 28, 2021

Owens-Brockway Glass Container, Inc.  
c/o Jim Nordmeyer  
Vice President, Global Sustainability  
O-I Glass, Inc.

BY EMAIL TO: [jim.nordmeyer@o-i.com](mailto:jim.nordmeyer@o-i.com)

CC: Geof Tichenor, Stoel Rives ([geoffrey.tichenor@stoel.com](mailto:geoffrey.tichenor@stoel.com))

**RE: Community Input Regarding Owens-Brockway's CAA Title V Violation (June 3, 2021)**

Dear Mr. Nordmeyer:

On behalf of the undersigned community organizations and Cully neighborhood members, we write to both express disappointment in Owens-Brockway's violations of the Clean Air Act (CAA), which have resulted in a third Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) enforcement action, and to urge O-I Glass, Inc. (hereafter O-I) to take action to address the concerning levels of pollution from the Owens-Brockway facility rather than fighting the most recent civil penalty of more than \$1 million.

The Owens-Brockway glass plant located in Portland's Cully neighborhood is a part of our city's rich history, our state's local economy, and one of the neighborhood's main job creators. Cully includes the most racially/ethnically diverse Census tract in Oregon. This urban area is home to over 13,000 people, about half of whom are people of color, with nine in ten children on free or reduced-price lunch. The neighborhood is also experiencing significant gentrification pressures. More than 25 percent of the community lives below the federal poverty line. Latino residents account for almost a quarter of Cully's population, followed by Black (16%) and Native American (9%) residents. Nearly one-fifth of residents are foreign-born, and the primary language for 31% of the population is non-English. The Cully neighborhood is considered an "overburdened community" under the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s environmental justice guidelines, acknowledging that we are the recipient of a disproportionate amount of the burden of pollution-related illnesses and discomfort.

It is therefore deeply disturbing and unacceptable that the Owens-Brockway glass plant, which thrives on local labor and community recycling, continues to violate the Clean Air Act Title V permit for opacity limits and particulate matter (PM) limits. Owens-Brockway's lack of preventative actions and refusal to install filters to reduce multiple pollutants of concern could easily be interpreted by many as systemic environmental racism that is rooted in placing dangerous industries near marginalized populations, including children and teachers at nearby public Title One schools, while ignoring the real health consequences from the facility's pollution stream and emissions. That lack of corporate social responsibility has no place in our community, and we will continue to challenge you to become a good community partner.

As you well know, opacity is an indicator of PM emissions levels and PM can contribute to respiratory distress in people, especially during a time of COVID-19. Owens-Brockway's opacity exceedances are part of a pattern of at least fifty violations of the opacity limit at both Furnaces A and D since 2009. The most recent violations and fines documented by DEQ are from April 22, 2019,<sup>1</sup> January 24, 2020,<sup>2</sup> and this month's more than \$1 million penalty on June 3, 2021.<sup>3</sup> Independent modeling conducted by engineer Todd Cloud (attached hereto) demonstrates that Owens-Brockway's actual emissions are likely to cause exceedances of the 1-hour National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for Sulfur Dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and Nitrogen Oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) even when the facility is operating only one furnace. We are disappointed and frustrated at Owens-Brockway's long, demonstrated history of noncompliance with environmental protections, and are deeply troubled by O-I's decision to drag out the regulatory process by requesting a hearing to appeal enforcement action.

The relationship between Owens Brockway and the Cully neighborhood is a strained and complicated one, but it does not have to be that way. As fellow community members that share the Cully neighborhood with you, we ask you to honor our right to and desire for clean air in the Cully neighborhood and all of Portland, while operating a law-abiding plant. Instead of expending resources appealing the Title V enforcement action, we urge you to focus on implementing control strategies that will both remedy the permit violations and reduce the multiple other pollutants of concern emitted from the facility. Importantly, we urge you to include the communities we represent in that process.

We know Owens-Brockway is not responsible for all environmental injustices in the area but want you to help start making it cleaner and safer for vulnerable populations, and to thrive as a positive community member.

Please include us in your compliance processes and conversations regarding the pollutants of concern at your facility and do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/nr/0419Owens-Brockway.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/nr/012420Owens-Brockway.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.oregon.gov/newsroom/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?newsid=54786>.

Sincerely,

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