



Cement's Toxic Legacy: PENNSYLVANIA

CONGRESSIONAL ATTACKS ON HEALTH PROTECTIONS



Cement manufacturers are dumping their pollution into Pennsylvanian communities with impunity. Lives are lost every year from this pollution, and our economy is forced to bear the burden of dollars spent on hospital visits, lost days at work, and sick Pennsylvanians who are breathing this toxic air pollution.

In August 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency at last adopted strong air pollution protections for more than 100 cement making facilities across the country, bringing pollution controls for this industry into compliance with Clean Air Act requirements that have been on the books since 1990. The protections make significant cuts in mercury, soot and other dangerous air toxics. The EPA estimates that the pollution cuts from these updates will prevent up to **2,500 premature deaths each year and yield up to \$18 billion in health benefits.**

But some members of Congress don't value saving lives and money and instead are carrying the demands of huge multinational cement companies that want to avoid cleaning up their toxic legacy. **H.J. Res. 42** would block the EPA's new requirement that these cement plants finally control their toxic air pollution with state-of-the-art pollution control technologies. A list of Pennsylvania cement kilns and their emissions of toxic mercury pollution is below.¹

Company	City	County	Kilns	Capacity (tons/yr)	Baseline Hg Emissions ² (lbs/yr)
Armstrong Cement	Cabot	Butler	2/wet	264,000	32
Buzzi Unicem	Stockertown	Northampton	2/dry	855,000	94
CEMEX	Wampum	Lawrence	3/dry	726,000	163
Essroc Cement	Bessemer ³	Lawrence	2/wet	605,000	146
Essroc Cement	Nazareth	Northampton	1/dry	1,280,000	169
Keystone Cement	Bath	Northampton	2/wet	560,000	83 ⁴
Lafarge N. America	Whitehall	Lehigh	2/dry	702,000	60
Lehigh Cement	Fleetwood	Berks	2/dry	1,066,000	81

THE DANGERS OF MERCURY

Mercury poisoning is a serious threat to our health. While adults can have severe reactions to mercury poisoning – typically brought about by consumption of fish tainted with methylmercury, a highly toxic mercury compound – young children and unborn babies are especially at risk. This is why women are strongly cautioned to avoid consumption of many kinds of fish before, during, or right after pregnancy. Exposure to methylmercury while still young or in the womb can have an irreversible impact on a child's development, including birth defects, brain damage, reduced IQ, and difficulty with reading, writing, and learning.

The EPA estimates that **more than 300,000 babies are born every year with an increased risk of learning disability due to *in utero* exposure to methylmercury.**⁵ Cement plants are among the worst mercury polluters. The EPA's recently finalized health protections will reduce cement plants' mercury emissions by more than 90 percent – in addition to dramatic cuts in other pollutants that impact our health such as lead, acid gases, and soot. We urge you to defend these health protections from efforts by your colleagues to block them from ever taking effect. Pennsylvania moms are counting on it.



FISH CONSUMPTION ADVISORIES

As of August 2010, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has issued fish consumption advisories across the state, warning its citizens to avoid eating certain types of fish, or to consume only specific amounts of certain fish due to mercury contamination. Fish consumption advisories currently exist for fish caught in the Delaware River Basin, the Susquehanna River Basin, the Ohio River Basin, the Lake Erie Basin and the Potomac River Basin.⁶

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¹ Data regarding company, city, number of kilns and capacity comes from the Portland Cement Association's "U.S. and Canadian Portland Cement Industry: Plant Information Summary," Dec. 31, 2008. Accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

² Unless otherwise noted, emissions data come from U.S. EPA Impacts Worksheet for 40 CFR Parts 60 and 63 "National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants From the Portland Cement Manufacturing Industry." For further explanation of baseline mercury emissions, see p. 9 of the EPA's summary of environmental and cost impacts for the rule:

http://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/pcem/summary_impacts.pdf

³ Essroc idled its Bessemer plant in mid-2009: <http://www.wyvtv.com/content/news/local/story/Essroc-Plant-Goes-Idle/anY2DSiVnkOYR90NT9W6cg.csp>

⁴ These data come from EPA's Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) database. Emissions are self-reported by the company.

⁵ <http://www.epa.gov/hg/exposure.htm>

⁶ Fish Consumption Advisory Listing for 2011: <http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=514&objID=554001&mode=2>