



CITY OF CHICAGO
CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Dear Resident,

Within the next month, construction will commence in your neighborhood on a coal-fired power plant. As you may be aware, Midwest Generation currently operates two older plants in the Pilsen and Little Village neighborhoods. The new Harrison Generating Station should exceed the environmental standards of those plants, but it may still emit some of the same byproducts in lower concentrations.

There is no need for action at this time. Residents within one mile of the new plant must legally be advised of potential impacts a coal-fired plant can have on their health and are advised to promptly seek medical attention if they experience any symptoms directly related to plant emissions.

Nitrogen oxides (NO_x): Nitrogen oxides play a major role in the formation of ground-level ozone (or smog) in the summertime. Smog triggers millions of asthma attacks each year in the U.S., and worsens or causes other respiratory ailments. NO_x also contributes to fine particulate matter (or soot), which is linked to a number of serious health effects, including premature deaths. This pollutant also contributes to acid rain, reduced visibility in urban areas and national parks, and the deterioration of coastal estuaries, harming fish and degrading water quality.

Mercury (HG): Mercury can cause severe nervous system problems in humans and wildlife. Especially vulnerable are developing fetuses, babies and children.

Sulfur dioxide (SO₂): Sulfur dioxide contributes to the formation of microscopic particles (particulate pollution or soot) that can be inhaled deep into the lungs and aggravate respiratory conditions such as asthma and chronic bronchitis, increasing cough and mucous secretion.

Carbon dioxide (CO₂): Carbon dioxide does not directly impair human health but is the most significant greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming. The dangers of global warming include disruption of global weather patterns and ecosystems, flooding, severe storms and droughts. A warming climate will also extend the range of infectious diseases.

We suggest you contact your physician for a baseline health assessment and schedule regular

visits in the coming years to ensure that you are not adversely affected by the new power plant in your neighborhood. The Department of Public Health will also continue to monitor the situation and share with you any additional information as needed.

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