

Mary Sage

We're already smelling something different and very unpleasant in the air in the middle of the night recently here on Vashon and Maury Islands - so much so that people are asking about and writing about it on the local island media forums.

I live on the north end of Vashon Island. The prevailing winds place Vashon Island and my family in the direct line of fallout from Tacoma's industrial and wastewater treatment emissions.

Our island has ongoing hazardous waste issues because of Tacoma's ASARCO smelter, requiring soil remediation, and we live with ongoing increased levels of heavy metals from that superfund.

For WestRock (and any other Tacoma industrial businesses) to be releasing toxins into the air is unconscionable. Clean air and a clean Puget Sound is of the utmost importance. Industry does NOT take precedence over health and safety.

The fallout from these emissions not only poisons our air and our soil - it also poisons our waters. Both Puget Sound, and the ground water that is our islands' sole source of fresh water for drinking and cooking, household use, animal and livestock water, watering our vegetable gardens - all of our water needs, are affected by Tacoma's industrial emissions. For WestRock to be polluting its own backyard by burning material that includes plastics, and producing power for an area two states away is utterly irresponsible and smacks of corporate greed.

The marine life in Puget Sound is already imperiled enough because of the runoff from rampant growth in the area. WestRock will be adding more nails to the coffin, for no other reason than profit and greed.

Please, do not allow this to happen.