

Nikie Walters

Dept of Ecology

After what we experienced in Wa last summer with the smoky skies for 2 weeks, im very concerned and appalled that polluting businesses, such as West Rock, were not required to shut down operation during thay time. With all the excessive particulate matter, we had no choice but to breathe it in on top of what we already deal with. For me, I was able to fend for myself, but what about those who work and live outdoors, what about those who already suffer from breathing illnesses and what about the elderly, disabled, youth and babies who cannot fend for themselves? As we plunge further into climate crisis every year, and we watch these recent smoky summers become regularly known as fire season in Washington, such as it has been a reality in California for the past 20 years and more political candidates who accept filthy fossil fuel money become our elected officials, we count on agencies, such as Ecology, to help protect us from for profit companies who act like they are doing wonderful things for us but are actually contaminating our environment.

All the fires that surrounded us left us with air which was equivalent to smoking at least 7 cigarettes a day. Add a factor such as anyone, maybe a kid, running to catch a bus, maybe to get to class on time or walking home after school or work and that 7 cigarettes begins to increase dramatically. Now let's add the polluting Port of Tacoma which nothing is measured cumulatively. We have multiple types of refineries discharging their waste into our air and according to the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, has particulate matter that not being addressed with the seriousness that the Port of Seattle has demonstrated. As we can see here, just by scratching the surface we have quite the toxic cocktail in our air in Tacoma.

Deny this permit, lets upgrade our monitoring systems that not only measures the particulate matter, but lets also measure the gasses and lets put people over profit for a change. We deserve a chance to thrive instead of die at the hand of polluting industry.

Thank you
Nikie Walters