

Kristina Oak

I am interested in this air permit because me and my husband work, host and attend community events in the West Side neighborhood of Saint Paul. I am concerned that by allowing increased particulate pollution in section 5 of the air permit, this permit will result in negative health impacts for our community.

The American Lung Association states that long-term chronic exposure to fine particulate matter (especially PM2.5) is correlated with an increased risk of lung cancer, cardiovascular disease, dementia and more negative health outcomes. The MN PCA itself has stated that poor air quality disproportionately affects low-income, diverse communities like ours - communities which already have increased risk of cardiovascular & lung disease. The MNPCA also found a record 52 air quality alert days in 2023, due in large part to wildfire smoke. It is common knowledge that our changing climate will continue to cause more wildfires. I am concerned that adding to our air pollution from Sani Max will only compound with annual wildfire smoke and increase our chronic exposure to harmful particulate matter. I am also concerned about Sani Mix in particular because they already have a history of air quality permit violations, which led to this new permit draft. When I think of the West Side, I think of an incredibly strong and diverse community already disproportionately affected by industrial pollution - The riverfront is full of industrial operations & the neighborhood often smells horrible when wind brings Sani Max pollution into the area. My husband, a mail carrier in the 55107 zip code, already has to wear a respirator outside many days, as AQI levels are often considered high for at-risk populations and sometimes even all populations. I worry for not just my husband and my own staff - I worry increased air pollution from Sani Max will harm every working class West Sider. I hope you will tighten constraints and hold Sani Max accountable to stricter emissions regulations. Thank you.