



BELLEVUE, PA

DAWN WINTERS

CONCERNS



ODORS



HEALTH



EFFECT ON
CHILDREN



STANDARD
OF LIVING

HEALTH EFFECTS



ALLERGIES



ASTHMA



CONGESTION

I moved to Bellevue in 2014 after living on the East End of Pittsburgh. My realtor sent us an article about the town and it's downtown area with shops. I like being outside so a community with sidewalks and places you can walk to, and its proximity to downtown, was a huge selling point.

Our research and no one we spoke to said anything about its proximity to the Shenango Coke Plant. But I learned very quickly after moving that the air quality was going to be a problem. At first I thought that the borough was proactive about filling potholes because it constantly smelled like tar. Then it dawned on me, this was happening on nights and weekends.

I can't see Shenango from here but I can smell it and I can see the pollution. It's a nuisance. I think twice about opening my doors and windows or going outside, particularly when the wind is from the southwest or on warm days because I know we're going to get the pollution hanging in the air. I worry about what's in the air and how that is going to affect my daughter's health. The odor is

unpleasant but it's what's in that odor and what it's going to do to her short-term and long-term health that I worry most about.

I had noticed when I moved to Pittsburgh, that I had gone from someone who had seasonal allergies to someone who had to start taking allergy medication practically every day. I had a scratchy throat and watery eyes much more regularly. It never really struck me that it was probably related to the amount of pollution in the area. And actually I ended up at the doctor over the course of the summer and they noticed that I've developed asthma.

When I first found out what was going on around here, obviously I contacted the Health Department and pretty much every elected official that we have. There needs to be some action to force the

Health Department, the agency that is tasked with protecting the health, welfare, and quality of life of the residents of Allegheny County, to hold them accountable to do their job. That's why I joined Allegheny County Clean Air Now, a local citizen's group that is working to make sure the agency tasked with our health is protecting us residents.

In general, I don't think the county has any interest in touching industry, because while they like to promote this idea that the city is now a greener place to live, that's really a smoke and mirrors routine. Where is the realization that if they really wanted to make Pittsburgh a livable city, clean air should be the number one priority?

I found out about Shenango closing from an email. It said "Merry Christmas" and that Shenango was closing. I thought it was a joke so I immediately checked the news and found something that said DTE Energy had in fact announced that Shenango was closing. I was just incredibly relieved that there was going to be an end to this particular pollution source. So there was an immense amount of relief and overall happiness that after everything everyone in this area has been through with that plant, it was coming to an end.

The air quality is noticeably better. Even in the summer with the heat and humidity, and the ozone and the particulate levels being up in the entire region, it didn't smell. **Every once in awhile you'll get something to remind you that you live in an area with a lot of industry but it's not an all day every day thing.** When you get a nice night and want to open your windows to sleep, we actually can now. It's amazing.

I also walk a lot more again. That has been huge because I tended to get frustrated because I would get my daughter in the stroller and we would get outside and get overcome by the stench coming from Shenango. It has made a huge difference in the quality of life. It's really been major major change.

You can have other forms of job-producing, green, sustainable energy and industry that isn't going to make your air quality worse. I think it would be wonderful. I sadly don't have high hopes that it is going to happen.

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Before it was extremely anxiety producing because you didn't know exactly what this was doing to you. And there was just a constant feeling of "I need to move as soon as possible." And that's just stressful. That is certainly gone, which is nice. But I do still worry about some of the other pollution sources around here.

I don't think the air quality problems are solved. I am reminded of that more when I leave the area for a few days. I got home from a trip recently and I am now plagued with a stuffy nose and congestion again, after not needing medication for most of the time away. And you see the haze constantly. It's much better than it was, but it's still very problematic.

I would like to see the remaining industry on Neville Island slowly start to peter out, but I don't know how likely that is. Certainly I do not want to see the Shenango site reindustrialized. I would like to see it reused for something non-polluting. But I think the only way that will happen is if the health department will get their act together and actually take a look at what is still going on over there.

I think that a solar array on the site would be fantastic. Just for Pittsburgh, just to say "hey look, we're really reinventing ourselves. Look, we've got a solar array on one of the largest polluting sites in the area. Things like that.