



102 Highland Ave. Suite 203
Roanoke, VA 24013
540-985-9835
www.breatheroanoke.org
breatheroanoke@yahoo.com

February 24, 2009

To whom it may concern:

We are writing to express our opposition to the proposed rezoning of 12.3 acres of property on West Main Street in the Glenvar area for the purpose of a new asphalt plant. Our concerns are for the health and welfare of the citizens, especially the children, who live, work, and go to school in this area.

As you know, this property sits only 0.5 miles from Glenvar Elementary, Glenvar Middle and Glenvar High Schools. We are concerned about the impact the asphalt plant can have on the air quality not only in the Glenvar area, but throughout the Greater Roanoke Valley as winds blow the emissions through the neighboring cities and counties. All health effects observed in adults are of potential concern in children.

According to the Ohio EPA Division of Air Pollution Control, emissions from asphalt plants are hazardous to human health (<http://www.bredl.org/pdf/factsheet-asphaltplants.pdf>). Common emissions include 7 substances that are toxic to air and water. They include hydrogen sulfide, benzene, chromium, formaldehyde, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHS), cadmium, and arsenic. Exposure to high concentrations of these toxins can cause respiratory distress, pulmonary edema, nervous system depression, neurobehavioral effects, tissue hypoxia, cardiovascular effects, unconsciousness and death. People with asthma are affected by even low levels of hydrogen sulfide. Breathing high levels of chromium (VI) can cause irritation to the nose, such as runny nose, nosebleeds, and ulcers and holes in the nasal septum. Inhalation of formaldehyde vapors can produce narrowing of the bronchi and accumulation of fluid in the lungs. Higher exposures can cause significant inflammation of the lower respiratory tract, resulting in swelling of the throat, inflammation of the windpipe and bronchi, narrowing of the bronchi, inflammation of the lungs, and accumulation of fluid in the lungs (*Medical Management Guidelines for Formaldehyde*, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, CAS #: 50-00-0, updated 11/02/06). Breathing air with very high levels of cadmium can severely damage the lungs and may cause death. Breathing air with lower levels of cadmium over long periods of time (for years) may result in kidney disease, lung damage and fragile bones. Breathing high levels of inorganic arsenic will result in a sore throat, irritated lungs and the potential to develop lung cancer. This has been seen mostly in workers exposed to arsenic at smelters, mines, and chemical factories, but also in residents living near smelters and chemical factories (<http://www.bredl.org/pdf/factsheet-asphaltplants.pdf>).

Because of the serious threat to health and well-being of children and adults not only in the Glenvar area but also in the Greater Roanoke Valley, we ask that you seriously consider the consequences of allowing an asphalt plant to be built in this area.

Sincerely,

Sarah W. Southard, PNP, BC

Sarah W. Southard, PNP, BC, AE-C

Pediatric Nurse Practitioner

Joseph R. Tamez, MD

Joseph R. Tamez, MD

Pediatric Pulmonologist

Kenneth Ows, RRT

President,

Greater Roanoke Valley

Asthma and Air Quality

Coalition