To: Smith, Molly[Smith.Molly@epa.gov]; Miller, Patrick[miller.patrick@epa.gov]; Marshall, Sarah[marshall.sarah@epa.gov]; Breneman, Sara[breneman.sara@epa.gov]; Cantello, Nicole[cantello.nicole@epa.gov]
Cc: Furey, Eileen[furey.eileen@epa.gov]; Nam, Ed[nam.ed@epa.gov]; Nelson, Leverett[nelson.leverett@epa.gov]; Rowan, Anne[rowan.anne@epa.gov]; Kelley, Jeff[kelley.jeff@epa.gov]; Beckmann, Ronna Erin[beckmann.ronna@epa.gov]; Arcaute, Francisco[Arcaute.Francisco@epa.gov]
From: Singer, Joshua
Sent: Wed 8/9/2017 3:07:09 PM
Subject: DNAInfo: Manganese A Threat To North Branch Too, Ald. Hopkins Says

FYI, here is one more SH Bell clip.

https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20170809/lincoln-park/manganese-pollution-north-branch-chicago-river-ald-brian-hopkins-southeast-side-steel-mills-calumet-chicago-department-of-public-health-study

Manganese A Threat To North Branch Too, Ald. Hopkins Says

By Ted Cox | August 9, 2017 6:14am

@tedcoxchicago

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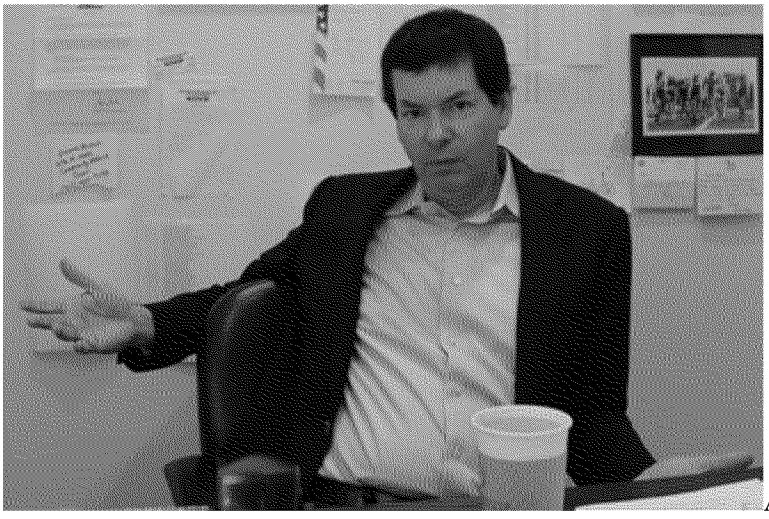
Ald. Brian Hopkins

DNAinfo/Ted Cox

LINCOLN PARK — A North Side alderman is calling for the city to monitor the presence of manganese in the North Branch Industrial Corridor, even as the Department of Public Health said it will continue to focus its study on the potentially dangerous substance on the Southeast Side.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced Monday the city would study the presence of manganese in and around former steel mills on the Southeast Side near the Calumet River.

That was after U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) late last month called out the federal Environmental Protection Agency, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the private S.H. Bell company to look into reports of petroleum coke and manganese pollution on the Southeast Side.

The City Council has already pursued measures against so-called petcoke, and the city has banned it from Southeast Side storage sites.

Hopkins piggybacked on Durbin's call last week, tweeting that manganese "has also been measured in neighborhoods downwind of the North Branch Industrial Corridor," along a 3.7-mile stretch of the Chicago River between Fullerton and Kinzie avenues.

Manganese is a vital nutrient found in many foods, but it is also an element used in steel production, and if inhaled as airborne pollution it's been found to impair the nervous system.

According to Hopkins' office, he's worked with Durbin on expanding the study of manganese to the North Side, and Durbin spokesman John Normoyle confirmed Tuesday "the alderman's office has just brought potential pollution concerns to our attention."

Yet Caitlin Polochak, spokeswoman for the city's Department of Public Health, said it would not be expanding its study to the North Side.

The department and the city "are committed to the health of our residents and our communities," Polochak said Tuesday, but she added, "At this time, the study is focused on the Southeast Side."

Just as the city is preparing to open the Southeast Side to housing developments, the North Branch Industrial Corridor has also been recently opened to mixed-use developments in a framework plan approved by the Department of Planning and Development and accompanying zoning changes approved by the City Council.

From: Singer, Joshua
Sent: Tuesday, August 08, 2017 5:05 PM
To: Smith, Molly <Smith.Molly@epa.gov>; Miller, Patrick <miller.patrick@epa.gov>; Marshall, Sarah <marshall.sarah@epa.gov>; Breneman, Sara <breneman.sara@epa.gov>; Cantello, Nicole <cantello.nicole@epa.gov>
Cc: Furey, Eileen <furey.eileen@epa.gov>; Nam, Ed <nam.ed@epa.gov>; Nelson, Leverett <nelson.leverett@epa.gov>; Rowan, Anne <rowan.anne@epa.gov>; Kelley, Jeff <kelley.jeff@epa.gov>; Beckmann, Ronna Erin <beckmann.ronna@epa.gov>; Arcaute, Francisco <Arcaute.Francisco@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: More S.H. Bell clips

FYI, one more clip.

https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/illinois/articles/2017-08-08/epa-high-levels-of-manganese-found-in-southeast-chicago

EPA: High Levels of Manganese Found in Southeast Chicago

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is cracking down on a Chicago facility after finding high levels of brain-damaging manganese in a low-income neighborhood.

Aug. 8, 2017, at 3:57 p.m.

EPA: High Levels of Manganese Found in Southeast Chicago

AP

CHICAGO (AP) — The Environmental Protection Agency has cited a Chicago facility after finding high levels of brain-damaging manganese in a low-income neighborhood.

Data the EPA shared Monday shows that air quality monitors around the S.H. Bell Co. facility recorded violations of federal health standards nearly 40 percent of the days when samples were collected.

S.H. Bell officials say over two dozen other facilities handling manganese could also be responsible.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Public Health Department officials said Monday that they'll expand efforts to reduce manganese exposure in the southeast part of the city.

The Chicago Tribune reports the findings come three years after investigators discovered the Pittsburgh-based company's pollution while examining petroleum coke at two nearby sites.

Manganese is an element used to make steel stronger and more rust resistant.

Josh Singer

U.S. EPA, Region 5

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From: Singer, Joshua
Sent: Tuesday, August 08, 2017 5:01 PM
To: Smith, Molly <Smith.Molly@epa.gov>; Miller, Patrick <miller.patrick@epa.gov>; Marshall, Sarah <marshall.sarah@epa.gov>; Breneman, Sara <breneman.sara@epa.gov>; Cantello, Nicole <cantello.nicole@epa.gov>
Cc: Furey, Eileen <furey.eileen@epa.gov>; Nam, Ed <nam.ed@epa.gov>; Nelson, Leverett <nelson.leverett@epa.gov>; Rowan, Anne <rowan.anne@epa.gov>; Kelley, Jeff <kelley.jeff@epa.gov>; Beckmann, Ronna Erin <beckmann.ronna@epa.gov>; Arcaute, Francisco <Arcaute.Francisco@epa.gov>
Subject: More S.H. Bell clips

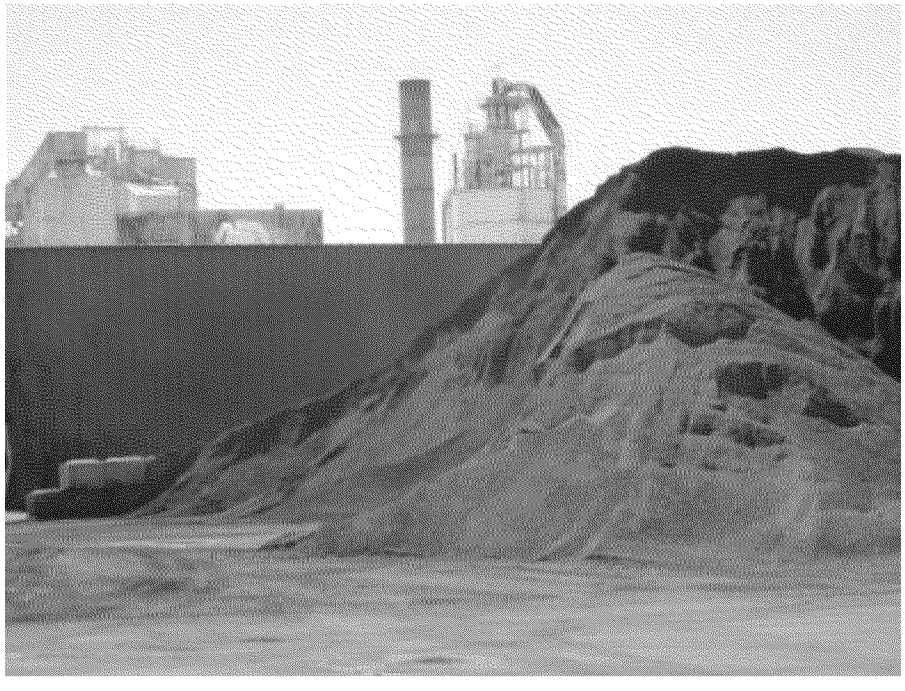
FYI. Here are some more clips.

http://chicago.suntimes.com/news/city-expands-pollution-study-after-epa-cites-southeast-side-company/

News

City expands pollution study after EPA cites Southeast Side company

Business 08/07/2017, 06:43pm



S.H. Bell's Southeast Side storage facility is located near 102nd Street on the Calumet River. | United States Environmental Protection Agency photo

Mitchell Armentrout

@mitchtrout | email

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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency investigators on Monday cited a Southeast Side industrial storage facility for emitting high levels of manganese, prompting city officials to expand studies on residents' exposure to the toxic dust.

The EPA pressured S.H. Bell Company to install air monitors at their facility at 10218 S. Avenue O at the start of March, tracking concentrations of the natural element used in steel production.

Through the end of June, the monitors detected an average of 0.32 micrograms of manganese per cubic meter, federal authorities announced on Monday. The minimal risk level is 0.3 micrograms.

Chronic inhalation of elevated manganese levels can lead to neurological damage, with symptoms similar to Parkinson's disease, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

In March, the city's Department of Public Health urged S.H. Bell to look into storing manganese in fully contained buildings to limit so-called "fugitive dust" from polluting the air. The outdoor storage facility sits adjacent to residential streets.

The city announced on Monday that it has hired a consultant to test the air and soil near homes in the Far South Side neighborhood, a longtime industrial dumping ground.

City inspectors will also expand investigations into other companies that handle manganese, according to a statement from Mayor Rahm Emanuel's office.

"Holding these companies accountable is about protecting the health of our children, our communities and our environment," Emanuel was quoted as saying.

S.H. Bell spokeswoman Alyssa Pistininzi said the company welcomes the city's study.

"We agree that we need a more comprehensive look at all companies in the area handling manganese, 27 that we know of, to fully evaluate the air quality in our community," Pistininzi said in an email, noting that warm summer weather generates more dust and could have affected the high manganese readings.

S.H. Bell will start operating a vacuum-like dust collector this month, she said.

The company has 30 days to respond to the EPA's findings.

http://abc7chicago.com/city-to-investigate-manganese-exposure-on-southeast-side/2284096/

City to investigate manganese exposure

on Southeast Side

Monday, August 07, 2017 05:54PM

CHICAGO (WLS) --

A dangerous pollutant that can damage the nervous system has been detected on Chicago's Southeast Side.

On Monday the Chicago Department of Public Health announced the launch an investigation into the impact on people's health in the area.

"Ensuring that residents are breathing clean air is our top priority," said Chicago Department of Public Health, Commissioner Dr. Julie Morita in a statement. "We are committed to completing thorough and rigorous study so we are able to then make data-informed regulatory recommendations as needed."

Manganese is a naturally-occurring heavy metal used in steelmaking. It's also an essential nutrient in small doses and is found in whole grains and green leafy vegetables. However, inhaling manganese in large amounts is hazardous.

The city announced it's conducting a study that will allow them to make data-informed decisions about future regulations, legal changes and appropriate response.

The city will also begin increased inspections at industrial sites on the Southeast Side.

https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20170807/south-chicago/city-step-up-study-of-pollution-created-by-steel-mills

City To Step Up Study Of Pollution Created By Steel Mills

By Heather Cherone | August 7, 2017 4:13pm | Updated August 8, 2017 10:57am

@HeatherCherone

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The U.S. Steel South Works site on the city's Southeast Side has reportedly found a buyer. View Full Caption

Flickr/Eric Allix Rogers

SOUTH CHICAGO — City officials will study the impact of pollution created by steel production on residents of the Southeast Side, where more than 20,000 new homes could be built, Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced Monday.

The study will measure the presence of manganese, an element that is used in steel production, in the area's soil, water and air, officials said. While small amounts of the nutrient can be found in whole grains and green leafy vegetables, inhaling large amounts of manganese can impair neurological functioning, according to federal officials.

"Holding these companies accountable is about protecting the health of our children, our communities and our environment," Emanuel said in a statement. "We will ensure that companies either clean up or shut down."

RELATED: 20,000 Homes Planned For Huge Vacant U.S. Steel Site As New Buyer Emerges

While the study is completed, city officials will step up inspections of S.H. Bell, a bulk storage firm, and other industrial sites on Chicago's Southeast Side, according to the mayor's statement.

The Environmental Protection Agency Monday cited S.H. Bell for exceeding a federal threshold for emissions of toxic manganese dust, as first reported by WTTW.

S.H. Bell officials said in a statement that they welcome the increased scrutiny and "a more comprehensive look at all companies in the area handling manganese, 27 that we know of" was

needed "to fully evaluate the air quality in our community."

Ald. Susan Sadlowski Garza (10th) said the residents of the Southeast Side would work to protect their "long and proud history."

"We will not allow any company, no matter how big, to put the health and safety of our community at risk," Sadlowski Garza said. "We will continue to work together, with city leaders and community activists, to ensure our air, water and soil are clean."

https://www.nrdc.org/media/2017/170807-0

"Neurotoxins Don't Belong In Our Neighborhoods" – EPA Takes Action Over Manganese Released on Chicago's Southeast Side

August 07, 2017

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today took action against a bulk storage facility over emissions of the neurotoxin manganese in close proximity to neighborhoods and schools on Chicago's Southeast Side. The EPA issued a notice of violation to S. H. Bell after posting monitoring data that showed manganese levels exceeding the federal health-based threshold. A coalition of neighbors and health groups had been raising the alarm for over a year.

Manganese is a heavy metal, used in steelmaking and other industrial processes, that is known to negatively impact brain function.

S.H. Bell is located directly across the Calumet River from a facility that was closed after holding massive piles of the oil refining waste petcoke and sparking national outrage. Approximately 10,000 children live within a one-mile radius of the facility.

Following is a joint statement from the Southeast Side Coalition to Ban Petcoke, the Southeast Environmental Task Force (SETF), Moms Clean Air Force, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and National Nurses United:

"The neighbors' concerns about this facility have been justified. Now, S.H. Bell needs to stop its manganese operations. Neurotoxins don't belong in our neighborhoods.

"The City of Chicago and EPA must step up quickly to help the community protect itself with access to information and appropriate healthcare professionals.

"This is another example of bulk storage facilities in Chicago endangering their neighbors. Manganese is handled in many locations across the region—the data points to a problem in this facility and it needs to be addressed now. But we also need to ensure others are not exposed to this toxic dust in other neighborhoods too.

"The Southeast Side bears a huge pollution burden. It is time for the City of Chicago to consider the cumulative impacts of the industrial and storage facilities in the area. As long as the City looks at these issues in piecemeal fashion, dirty and dangerous projects will continue to be pushed on the community. That is unfair and we will continue fighting against this injustice."

More information on the EPA action available at https://www.epa.gov/il/sh-bell-chicago-facility

http://www.nwitimes.com/business/epa-cites-southeast-side-company-s-h-bell-co-for/article_72906e76-1e23-5cee-8e72-ab3965993549.html

EPA cites Southeast Side company S.H. Bell Co. for air pollution

- Joseph S. Pete joseph.pete@nwi.com, 219-933-3316
- Aug 8, 2017 Updated 7 min ago

KOCH
People over Profit
Toxic

Five protesters were arrested after blockading a petcoke storage facility on Chicago's Southeast Side, where heavy industry operates amid residential neighborhoods and residents have complained about air pollution. The Southeast Side Coalition to Ban Petcoke is now concerned with excessive manganese emissions.

Industrial materials handler S.H. Bell Co. was cited by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency excessive manganese emissions from its terminal just across the state line on Chicago's Southeast Side.

The EPA found the facility at 10218 South Ave. "O" on the east bank of the Calumet River, which handles various bulk materials, released an average of 0.32 micrograms per cubic meter of manganese into the air over the last four months, which is higher than the minimal risk level for chronic installation exposure. The naturally occurring element manganese, which is used to make steel and in other industrial processes at factories, can be toxic and cause neurological and neuropsychological damage for people who are exposed to excessive amounts.

“EPA is committed to protecting public health in southeast Chicago by ensuring S.H. Bell complies with the Clean Air Act,” said Patrick Traylor, deputy assistant administrator for EPA’s Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance. “EPA required the company to do additional monitoring which revealed the exceedance.”

The Pittsburgh-based company, which has a second Chicago facility on Lake Calumet on the South Side, said it was just one of at least 27 companies in the area that handles manganese.

"Regarding our June data, hotter weather generates dust from all types of sources and we expected that we might see the highest monitor readings during the summer, including readings of metals that are not in any of S.H. Bell’s materials," spokeswoman Alyssa Pistininzi said in a statement. "While we are still seeing the impact of offsite sources on monitor readings, we are examining our operations to identify other potential causes. To get a full picture, we need to analyze the data that will be available once our state-of-the-art large dust collectors become operational this month."

Pistininzi said the company welcomed a broader study.

"It is also important to note that the minimal risk level is not intended to be an 'allowable level' or compliance or action level," she said." It also doesn’t mean there is a health threat."

Southeast Side residents have grown increasingly concerned with air pollution that's resulted from the bulk storage of materials like petcoke on the Calumet River. They successfully lobbied for a crackdown on petcoke handlers after dusty clouds of the petroleum byproduct blew through their neighborhood in 2014.

“This is another example of bulk storage facilities in Chicago endangering their neighbors. Manganese is handled in many locations across the region — the data points to a problem in this facility and it needs to be addressed now. But we also need to ensure others are not exposed to

this toxic dust in other neighborhoods too," the Southeast Side Coalition to Ban Petcoke, the Southeast Environmental Task Force, Moms Clean Air Force, Natural Resources Defense Council and National Nurses United said in a joint statement.

From: Singer, Joshua
Sent: Tuesday, August 08, 2017 9:24 AM
To: Smith, Molly <Smith.Molly@epa.gov>; Miller, Patrick <miller.patrick@epa.gov>; Marshall, Sarah <marshall.sarah@epa.gov>; Breneman, Sara <breneman.sara@epa.gov>; Cantello, Nicole <cantello.nicole@epa.gov>
Cc: Furey, Eileen <furey.eileen@epa.gov>; Nam, Ed <nam.ed@epa.gov>; Nelson, Leverett <nelson.leverett@epa.gov>; Rowan, Anne <rowan.anne@epa.gov>; Kelley, Jeff <kelley.jeff@epa.gov>; Beckmann, Ronna Erin <beckmann.ronna@epa.gov>
Subject: Chicago Tribune: High manganese levels lead EPA to crack down on Southeast Side polluter

FYI.

http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-sh-bell-manganese-pollution-met-20170807-story.html

High manganese levels lead EPA to crack down on Southeast Side polluter

Michael Hawthorne Contact Reporter Chicago Tribune

Federal environmental regulators are cracking down on a Southeast Side company after finding high levels of brain-damaging manganese in a low-income, predominantly Latino neighborhood.

Air quality monitors posted around the S.H. Bell Co. storage terminal recorded violations of federal health standards during nearly 40 percent of the days when samples were collected

between March and June, according to data posted online Monday by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Average concentrations of the heavy metal exceeded the legal limit of 0.3 micrograms per cubic meter of air during the period and spiked up to four times higher, prompting the EPA to cite S.H. Bell with violations of the federal Clean Air Act.

The alarming findings come three years after investigators stumbled across S.H. Bell while taking a closer look at two nearby sites that stored dusty piles of petroleum coke along the Calumet River.

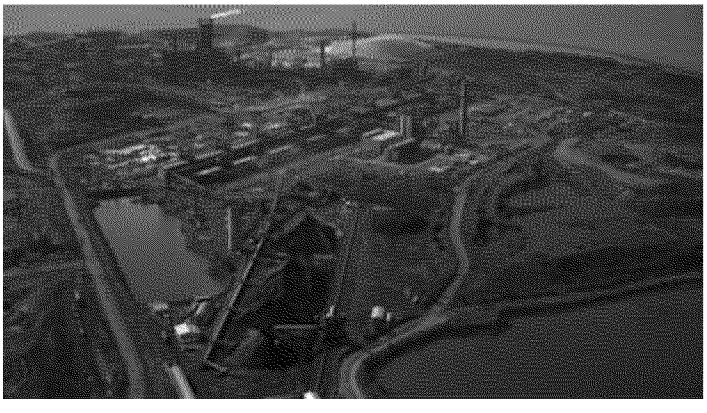
Monitors at one of the sites owned by KCBX Terminals picked up high levels of manganese on days when winds blew across the river from the vicinity of S.H. Bell's facility between 101st and 103rd streets. After S.H. Bell repeatedly ignored federal and city orders to install additional monitors, a court-ordered legal settlement required the equipment to be up and running by March.

Records submitted by the company last week showed that S.H. Bell's pollution problems worsened during the summer. Manganese levels exceeded the federal limit on seven of the nine days sampled during June.

Neighborhood activists and national environmental groups said the test results reinforce the need for more rigorous oversight of polluters on the Southeast Side, which continues to struggle with the legacy of contamination from the area's once-thriving steel industry.

"As long as the city looks at these issues in piecemeal fashion, dirty and dangerous projects will continue to be pushed on this community," said a joint statement from the Southeast Side Coalition to Ban Petcoke, the Southeast Environmental Task Force, Mom's Clean Air Force, Natural Resources Defense Council and National Nurses United.

In an email, Pittsburgh-based S.H. Bell said more than two dozen other facilities that handle manganese could be partially responsible for pollution detected by monitors around the company's site. Levels of the heavy metal should drop below the federal limit after S.H. Bell finishes installing a new dust-collection system this month, a company spokeswoman said.



Manganese is a naturally occurring element used to make steel stronger and more rust resistant. It generally isn't visible in the air, unlike the gritty, lung-damaging petcoke dust that blew from the KCBX piles until months of pressure from politicians and the public forced the company to remove them.

Researchers once assumed manganese posed hazards only for steelworkers. But the EPA and other health agencies are increasingly concerned about manganese pollution wafting into areas near facilities that handle the heavy metal. Regular exposure can cause manganism, a condition with symptoms similar to Parkinson's disease, and can make it more difficult for children to learn and remember.

About 20,000 people, including 1,730 children age 5 and younger, live within a mile of the S.H. Bell facility.

The EPA, Illinois EPA and Mayor Rahm Emanuel issued statements vowing to get tough with the company.

"Just as we held petcoke handlers to higher standards, we will ensure that companies either clean up or shut down," Emanuel said.

In Ohio, federal and state officials have pushed S.H. Bell to curb manganese emissions from its facilities near East Liverpool, a struggling factory town on the Pennsylvania border west of Pittsburgh.

A 2010 federal study found that people living near the Ohio facilities were more likely to suffer body tremors and have problems with motor skills — ailments linked to chronic manganese exposure.

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