

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3806

May 1, 2007

Administrator Stephen L. Johnson
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

RE: Montgomery County, Pennsylvania TCE Emissions – Borough of Collegeville,
Borough of Trappe, Upper Providence Township, and Lower Providence Township

Dear Administrator Johnson:

Attached herewith is a copy of a April 20, 2007 letter from three state legislators in southeastern Pennsylvania expressing their significant concerns over the EPA's recent regulation pertaining to allowable TCE emissions in certain industries. These concerns arise from ongoing TCE emissions by a number of area businesses that has caused widespread fear and anxiety that the levels of those emissions may be contribute to increased incidents of various cancers in the region. For the reasons set forth in this correspondence, I likewise have very significant concerns over the current EPA regulation regarding TCE emissions and I am seeking your support and assistance to properly rectify this situation.

It is my understanding that a new regulation has been finalized, effective April 17th, 2007, that exempts three industry sectors from prescribed emission limitations. Currently, TCE emissions from two industrial degreasing operations in the Collegeville, PA area have had a negative impact on air quality and many believe that those operations may contribute to increased risks of cancer to nearby residents. Despite extensive monitoring by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and DEP's reporting of these monitoring results to the EPA, the EPA still exempted certain aerospace, narrow tubing and degreasing industries from new emissions limitations. Consequently, these state legislators, Governor Rendell, the DEP, area residents and I are extremely concerned that these exemptions to the new emissions regulation is permitting emissions that may be harmful to local residents. More particularly, we simply cannot understand why some industries are required to meet very stringent and appropriate emission limitations while other industries, including those locally, are not required to meet those same emissions standards. If TCE emissions present possible harm to the health and safety of citizens, those regulatory restrictions ought to be applicable to each and every industry that emits TCE as part of their operational processes.

DISTRICT OFFICES:

BERKS COUNTY
501 NORTH PARK ROAD
WYOMISSING, PA 19610
(610) 376-7630
FAX: (610) 376-7633

CHESTER COUNTY
111 EAST UNCHLAN AVENUE
EXTON, PA 19341
(610) 594-1415
FAX: (610) 594-1419

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
580 MAIN STREET, SUITE 4
TRAPPE, PA 19426
(610) 409-2780
FAX: (610) 409-7988

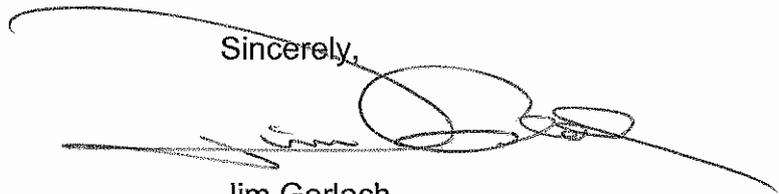
As a result, I would like to convene as quickly as possible a meeting with EPA officials, DEP officials, state legislators and myself to get a better understanding as to the justification and rationale for the current regulatory standards and exemptions and, most importantly, what can be done to modify the existing regulation to make tough TCE emission limitations applicable to all TCE emitters.

I look forward to hearing from at your earliest convenience regarding your participation in this matter.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Gerlach", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jim Gerlach
Member of Congress

JG:kg

CC: Secretary Kathleen McGinty
Dr. Joseph DiMino, Montgomery County Health Department
State Senator John Rafferty
State Senator Andy Dinniman
State Representative Mike Vereb
U.S. Senator Arlen Specter
U.S. Senator Robert Casey
Congressman Charles Dent
Congressman Joseph Sestak
Collegeville Borough Council
Albert Stagliano, Mayor of Collegeville
Trappe Borough Council
Connie Peck, Mayor of Trappe
Upper Providence Township Board of Supervisors
Lower Providence Township Board of Supervisors

44TH DISTRICT
JOHN C. RAFFERTY, JR.

- SENATE BOX 203044
459 MAIN CAPITOL BUILDING
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-3044
(717) 787-1398
FAX (717) 783-4587
- COLLEGEVILLE PROFESSIONAL CENTER
3770 RIDGE PIKE
COLLEGEVILLE, PA 19426
(610) 831-8830
FAX (610) 831-8837
- THE SHOPPES AT PUGH TOWN
2325 POTTSTOWN PIKE
POTTSTOWN, PA 19465
(610) 460-8390
FAX (610) 460-8394

INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS:
jrafferty@psen.gov

WEBSITE:
www.senatorrafferty.com



Senate of Pennsylvania

COMMITTEES

LAW & JUSTICE, CHAIRMAN
COMMUNICATIONS & TECHNOLOGY, VICE-CHAIRMAN
AGING & YOUTH
APPROPRIATIONS
JUDICIARY
POLICY

ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR THE SOUTHEASTERN
VETERAN'S CENTER

TARGETED COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION
AND CRIME PREVENTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION ON CRIME
AND DELINQUENCY

April 20, 2007

Congressman Gerlach
111 East Uwchlan Avenue
Exton, PA 19341

APR 25 2007

Dear Congressman Gerlach;

We are dismayed to learn that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is not taking this issue of trichloroethylene (TCE) air emissions seriously. We hope that you are also troubled by the EPA's lax oversight, and ask that you make every effort to require the EPA to take a more aggressive stance in the reduction of this carcinogenic pollutant.

TCE, a chemical used in the degreasing process of metal products ranging from hypodermic needles to aerospace machinery, has been linked to several forms of cancer including liver, ovarian, prostate, and kidney among other internal organs. TCE levels in the Borough of Collegeville, Borough of Trappe, Lower Providence Township and Upper Providence Township have been discovered to be at levels that, scientists feel, create a serious health risk to residents. The cumulative effects of TCE are well documented and can have a serious deleterious impact on children and prenatal infants in areas where the chemical is released into the air.

While the two manufactures located in Lower Providence and Trappe that use TCE as a degreasing solvent are within current EPA regulations, the combined emissions from the facilities have created a dangerous toxic environment. Recently the EPA released new regulations regarding toxic air pollutants entitled: "National Air Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants: Halogenated Solvent Cleaning". In this new standards sheet the EPA specifically exempts narrow tube manufacturers (section III A 3) such as Accellent and Superior Tube, the two major offenders in the region.

We are furious in the EPA's lack of both community involvement and interaction with government officials in their final determination to exempt these businesses. Their public response period prior to the finalization of this document was not properly advertised considering the severity of this concern. The health and welfare of our constituents should come as a paramount issue for all elected officials.

We are disappointed and outraged at the recent EPA National Air Emissions Regulations, and request your support for an immediate review by the EPA of the aforementioned document. There can be no justifiable reason for the EPA to exempt the narrow tube manufacturers from a mandatory reduction of this toxic and caustic chemical.

Your support is vital to help the communities and residents of not only the Greater Collegeville area, but many other areas of the Nation where TCE is emitted into the air. We ask that you join us in finding a solution to this issue so that we may preserve the health of our local communities.

Very Truly Yours,



Senator John Rafferty
44th Senatorial District



Senator Andy Dinniman
19th Senatorial District



Representative Mike Vereb
150th Legislative District

cc: Senator Arlen Specter
Senator Robert Casey
Congressman Charlie Dent
Congressman Joe Sestak