

Pamela Cragin
South Portland

Dear Committee Members,

The toxic tank farm fumes have been making me and my loved ones ill for decades. I've come to calling them the "the cancer fumes". When the petroleum fumes suffuse the neighborhood, often at night, nausea, dizziness, headaches, swollen glands, heart pain are among our symptoms. Our home is near Gulf tanks, our shopping center at Mill Creek is near Citgo tanks, my workplace is near Global and Sprague tanks. In South Portland, with 120 tanks embedded near our homes and schools, the cancer fumes are unavoidable.

In the the late evening, I used to bicycle to work, where I care for women with disabilities, but the air along the way was frequently painful to breath. When I learned we could be exposed to 625 tons of these toxic fumes each year, and they cause illness and cancer, I could no longer bicycle to work.

We launch our lobster boat at Bug Light Park, next to the Gulf tanks. We hope, upon return, to leave before the tanks, tanker ships, and trucks pollute the night. Meanwhile, at the park, unaware of dangers, families picnic with their babies, kites fly, elders walk and breast cancer triathletes train, all breathing the cancer fumes. With no public warning, these toxic emissions, benzenes and more, accumulate in our bodies, time and time again.

During these noxious bursts, sometimes we can't get our house sealed fast enough and I've worn a gas mask indoors. But, this is not a solution for any of us.

My sister, a life long resident and employee of South Portland, was diagnosed with cancer at age 39 and passed at age 46. It is possible that tank fumes triggered her cancer and impaired her ability to fight it. And, for this reason, I worry about everyone in our community, especially children.

To the petroleum industry, Maine Department of Environmental Protection, and elected officials, our neighborhoods urge you to support LD 1532 and stop the cancer fumes immediately.

Sincerely,
Pamela Cragin
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