

## **CAFA NOW Newsletter #3 March 2022**

### **Update: Recent Actions/Announcements by Intel NM and the New Mexico Environment Department**

In our last newsletter, we told you that Intel will continue to use its old emissions abatement equipment (thermal oxidizers and acid gas scrubbers) and that they would be repositioning some of it to accommodate the new production that is planned for the north end of the plant. This information was included in the request they submitted to the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) as part of their application to update their existing air emissions permit. Turns out, they are only moving the equipment on paper, not physically, which is very confusing to us and something we still cannot explain.

Also, as we told you in the last newsletter, Intel has announced that they will install 5 new thermal oxidizers in addition to the 8 currently on site and 8 new scrubbers to the 27 existing ones. So we can see that emissions are going to rise substantially. The latest we have heard is that the new production is scheduled to begin by the end of the year.

The other part of Intel's application was some air modeling intended to demonstrate that the repositioning of equipment would not increase the concentration of pollutant streams. Per existing procedure, this application was to be approved upon receipt. Nevertheless, one of our members did review it,

found numerous errors and shortcomings and requested of Intel and NMED that corrections be made, which they were. Still, NMED's focus was on the air modeling and the on-paper equipment relocation rather than the increase in toxic chemicals that Intel is going to be releasing and what new chemicals will be added to the toxic mix. We have pointed this out to appropriate officials at NMED and asked why they seem to be ignoring the most important issue. To date, we have received no response. The EPA endorses these procedures and allows NMED to operate in this manner. Clearly, the Federal and State laws, rules, regulations and procedures presently in place provide little or no oversight or real regulation and do not protect us.

We have filed a New Mexico Inspection of Public Records Act (IPRA) request for copies of the stack testing reports from January 1, 2019 through March 31, 2022 that Intel is required to submit to NMED. We have also requested from the Sandoval County Local Emergency Planning Committee the most recent report about quantities of chemicals that Intel has on site, an annual report that is required by the Federal Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act. Assuming all of these data are forthcoming, we will be able to share with you the various chemicals that Intel is emitting and the risks that exposure to them poses for human health.

## **EPA Inaction**

The EPA delegates responsibility for most air emissions permitting to the states but is ultimately responsible to ensure

that the process is done correctly and within the limits of EPA's regulations. While continuing to make our concerns about Intel's permit known to NMED, we have been in constant contact with staff at the EPA Region VI offices in Dallas. Among other things, we have asked them to look closely at the procedures employed by NMED for issuing permits and to review some of the content of the existing Intel NM permit which we believe is totally inappropriate. The responses that we have received so far reveal the inadequacies of the EPA's regulations and oversight.

### **CAFA-now Website**

Unfortunately, our original website coordinator has decided not to continue the work and so our website has been taken down. We have a lot of material that we want to share on the website and are frustrated that we have not been able to make the progress that we had hoped for.

Our partner organization, Portland Clean Air, has staff on-site who do this sort of work and the good news is that they will create our new website for no cost. We will continue our efforts until successful and will keep you apprised.

### **Social Media Coordinator**

We are also seeking help to expand our social media presence and reach. If you are knowledgeable about social media and would like to help with this, or if you know someone who

might be willing and able to pitch in, please reply directly to our e-mail address: [cafanow@gmail.com](mailto:cafanow@gmail.com)

## **Project to Identify, Measure and Monitor Intel's Emissions**

We are on a learning curve with this project but are making progress. In order to familiarize ourselves with the equipment and procedures, we recently collected two canister air "grab samples" and had them analyzed by a laboratory.

The findings were not remarkable. The first sample contained Ethanol and 2 Propanol. They are considered solvents and are used in a variety of industrial settings including the microprocessor industry. The low levels detected do not pose a risk. The other sample did not contain any of the 65 volatile organic compounds in the testing regimen.

The samples were collected during an inversion but no chemical odors were present at the two sites. We will continue this effort later in the spring and summer when the weather is more conducive to collecting samples that are more likely to contain chemicals. We will now have the option for two different kinds of valves for the equipment – one for a 5-minute sample and the other for a 24 hour sample.

We have procured 5 small air pollution monitors which measure two sizes of particulates, nitrogen oxide, and total volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Once each minute, they

take a reading and the data are then transmitted via Bluetooth to an app on I-phones. We are awaiting receipt of the I-phones which are older reconditioned models. Once all is ready, we will deploy the monitors and their accompanying I-phones to the east, west and north of the Intel plant to collect data 24 hours a day for an extended period. They only need to be plugged in and hung under porches, patios and the like as long as they are protected from rain. When we have enough data, we will forward it to our partner organization, Portland Clean Air, where it will be put through a system to analyze, graph and map it. This will help us determine where the concentrations of chemicals are likely greatest so we can focus on collecting grab samples in those areas.

## **Recent News Media Attention on Ohio Intel Expansion**

On January 20, Time magazine published an article about Intel's \$20 billion plan to build a mega chip manufacturing facility outside Columbus Ohio. The reporter, Alana Semuels, focused mostly on the business aspect and how the new plant would impact the area. She interviewed CAFA-now Co-Chair Dennis O'Mara to ask whether Intel NM's emissions remained an issue of concern here in New Mexico and included brief mention of that in the article which you can read here: <https://time.com/6140476/intel-building-factory-ohio/>

Ms. Semuels is preparing another article which will focus exclusively on Intel's air pollution and its impact on individuals who are exposed to it. Dennis contributed a little more

information for this article and referred her to Greg Bourget, Chief Executive of Portland Clean Air whom she interviewed more extensively. She also interviewed Dr. Chuck Wiggins, director of the New Mexico Tumor Registry, who is preparing the updated version of the assessment of cancer rates in the 14 census tracts surrounding Intel NM.

CAFA-now Co-Chair Marcy Brandenburg arranged for the spokesperson for Portland Clean Air, Seth Woolley, to participate in an interview with a reporter from the NBC TV affiliate in Columbus OH to discuss these same topics. Previously, Dennis O'Mara had done a similar interview with a reporter from the Columbus Dispatch. And CAFA-now member Dr. Louis Scuderi commented in the New York Times in response to an NYT article about these same topics.

## **Recent Local News Coverage**

In the past few months, Marcy Brandenburg, Dennis O'Mara, Barbara Rockwell (founder of Corrales Residents for Clean Air and Water (CRAW) and author of Boiling Frogs: Intel vs. the Village), and Fred Marsh, long-time member of CRAW, have written letters of concern about Intel NM published in the Albuquerque Journal and the Corrales Comment. CAFA-now plans to organize a press conference in the near future to bring more local attention to these issues and our concerns.

## **Zoom Meeting for Members and Interested Individuals**

In the near future, we plan to host a ZOOM meeting for members and any others who may be interested. We will try to bring everyone up to speed on progress we are making, provide updates on the cancer and vegetation studies and answer questions anyone may have. In addition, we will look for suggestions about how to move ahead and will seek volunteers to undertake some specific tasks.

## **CAFA-now Funding**

Initially, we relied on donations from some very generous members through our 501©3 organization, Cascadia Action. In addition to direct donations, we have established a GoFundMe page with a goal of \$20,000 but to date, we have only received \$345. If you would like to donate, go to the GoFundMe site and type "Intel" into the search box which will lead you to the correct link. The page says "Curb Intel Pollution in Your NM Neighborhood." You can opt to use a credit card or Pay Pal. All donations are tax-deductible and you will receive a receipt. Donations of any size are helpful including small ones which increase the number of contributors and therefore may prompt others to join in the effort. Or if you prefer, you may send a check made out to Cascadia Action directly to: Cascadia Action at 3439 SE Hawthorne Blvd., #241, Portland, OR 97214. Be sure to put "For CAFA-now" on the memo line of your check.

We also applied for a small grant from the Center for Health, Environment and Justice for \$3,700. The good news is that application was approved on March 28 and funding will be forthcoming shortly. Meanwhile, we will try to find other organizations that provide these kinds of grants.

## **Contact Us**

Our e-mail address is [cafanow@gmail.com](mailto:cafanow@gmail.com). Or if you need to reach us on a more urgent basis, call CAFA-now Co-Chairs Marcy Brandenburg (505-288-0093) or Dennis O'Mara (505-803-6590).