

Public Hearing Comments

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 1 attachments (20 KB)

INFORMATION ON THE CONSEQUENCES OF CREMATION (2).docx;

Comments on Docket #2020-P-A-0019 (Congo Funeral Home)

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Comments:

Greetings, After further research I'm beyond words that we're having a discussion about erecting a crematory within the city limits of Wilmington, Delaware; specifically N. Cleveland Ave Wilmington, DE 19805. Additionally, I learned about their intentions through the word of mouth. I'm perplexed that our community was not officially notified of their intentions. Whoever's responsibility it was, I'm truly disappointed. The information I've gained is mind-blowing. The toxins that would be placed into the atmosphere have too many variables. From the diet a person consumed, fillings in their teeth, breast implants to pacemakers can impact our community if not removed prior to burning a body. I don't have faith that they (Congo Funeral Home) would take the necessary steps to uncover whatever artificial objects are in a deceased body and remove them before the cremation process. Additionally birth defects, learning disabilities are already affecting our youth because of the various pesticides used to produce food and the diet feed to animals. My father Curtis Howard was the first African American bus driver for the state of Delaware (aka Delaware Coach Company). My hero endured countless threats on his life and family because of the color of his skin. He survived many injustices to provide for his legacy. As his offspring I'm going to carry the torch and continue to fight for the things that cripple us as a people and community. Here's an idea...tell the Congo Funeral to partner with existing crematories if they care about the folks who pay their salaries; African Americans. I've also attached a document that clearly outlines the harmful effects on crematories.

INFORMATION ON THE CONSEQUENCES OF CREMATION

When burning humans or other animals, there are toxic emissions associated with it, particularly when the following contaminants are an issue:

- any [mercury amalgam dental fillings](#) which haven't been removed
- organohalogens ([dioxins](#), furans, etc.) and other toxics accumulated through diet and other exposures (this is unavoidable, though a [vegan/vegetarian](#) diet will minimize exposure and toxin accumulation)
- any plutonium pacemakers which haven't been removed
- [silicone breast implants](#), which can contain PVC, Methylene Chloride and other toxic chemicals
- other metal or plastic implants in humans

Health Studies

- This [2003 study](#) shows that the risk of stillbirth was 4% higher and the risk of the life threatening brain abnormality [anencephalus](#) was 5% higher among babies whose mothers lived near to crematoria. [More details here.](#)
- Canada's [Interior Health Authority](#) did a literature review and "concluded that fumes from crematoriums are potentially harmful and that they should not be located close to a residential area." It also "found that particulate matter, which can be inhaled deep into lung tissue, is the chief threat." (see "[Put a lid on fumes from cremation](#)," *Vancouver Sun*, 5/12/2006)
- [Public Health Impact of Crematoria](#) (report by Chief Medical Officer of British Columbia outlining mercury, dioxin, particulate matter and other emissions concerns; report states that crematoria could have a negative impact on health and should not be located in residential neighborhoods)

Mercury Emissions

- [Summary of References on Mercury Emissions from Crematoria](#) (November 3, 2008 - by John Reindl, P.E., retired from Dane County, Wisconsin Department of Public Works; please send comments and feedback [here](#))
- [Conclusions of Grinnell community residents studying mercury emissions from crematoria](#) (good compilation of research on crematoria mercury emissions; see documentation and links at bottom of page)
- Crematoria in the UK emit 11% of all the mercury released by industry and power plants ([Your fillings will live on after your death to kill the environment](#), Sunday Herald, UK, 2/11/2001)
- [Mercury emissions from crematoria](#) (UK Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs report, 2003)
- [2005 study shows that crematoria can't meet mercury and dioxin limits](#)

- [Public Health Impact of Crematoria](#) (report by Chief Medical Officer of British Columbia)
- [Roadmap For Mercury"](#) (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2006)
- [Chemical Profile for Mercury](#) (Health impact info from Scorecard.org)
- [Mercury Fact Sheet](#) (NJ Department of Health)

Mercury Amalgam Fillings:

- [Consumers for Dental Choice](#)
- [Dental Amalgam Mercury Syndrome](#)

Removal of Mercury Amalgam Fillings Prior to Cremation:

- Sweden: [Pull Mercury from Mouths of Dead](#) (Planet Ark, 5/21/2004)
- California: [Pulling Teeth](#) (From the June 8-14, 2000 issue of *Metro*, Silicon Valley's Weekly Newspaper)

Dioxin

- [EPA data on dioxin emissions from crematoria](#) (crematoria-related excerpts from [EPA's Dioxin Inventory](#))
- [2005 study shows that crematoria can't meet mercury and dioxin limits](#)
- [Public Health Impact of Crematoria](#) (report by Chief Medical Officer of British Columbia)
- [Dioxin Homepage](#)

In EPA's [2000 Inventory of Dioxin Emissions in the U.S.](#) (published March 2005), they estimate that crematoria emit 410 ng of dioxin TEQ (Toxic Equivalents) per body.

This equates to as much [dioxin](#) as burning:

- 3,205 pounds of [tires](#);
- 320 pounds of trash in a [trash incinerator](#); or
- 426 pounds of hazardous waste in a hazardous waste incinerator

Source: p1-40 in [Chapter 1](#) of [EPA's Dioxin Inventory](#)

Ordinances Used to Combat Crematoria

Two crematoria were stopped by local governments in Pennsylvania in 2006 and 2007 through the use of local air pollution ordinances. West Reading Borough passed an ordinance requiring [continuous monitoring](#) of mercury emissions, real-time reporting of emissions data on a website and establishing strict emissions limits. Kulpmont Borough later passed a similar ordinance, regulating both mercury and dioxins and creating a 900-foot set-back requirement from residential properties. See [ActionPA's ordinance page](#) for details.

Green Burial

There are green burial options that don't require incineration and which don't have the problems associated with modern cemeteries. For details, see the following websites:

- [Green Burial](#)
- [Green Burial Council](#) and their [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Grave Matters](#) book on green burial
- [NPR interview with author of Grave Matters book](#)
- [Promessa](#) is the Swedish invention of freeze-drying a corpse, pulverizing it, separating metals (tooth fillings, replacement hips) for recycling, and composting the remaining organic material within a year, with the option of having the buried remains feed and become a tree. This appears to be the most 'green' form of disposition.

<http://www.ejnet.org/crematoria/>