

Public Hearing Comments

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Wed 8/19/2020 9:42 AM

To: HearingComments, DNREC (MailBox Resources) <DNRECHearingComments@delaware.gov>; theonixjr@verizon.net <theonixjr@verizon.net>

 1 attachments (19 KB)

INFORMATION ON THE CONSEQUENCES OF CREMATION.docx;

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

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Organization: No

Comments:

My name is Attorney Theophilus R. Nix, JR., Esq., My family has resided in this great neighborhood for 56 years. My father was the second African American attorney in Delaware. My mother, DR. Lulu Mae Nix founded DAPI. They fought for justice for African Americans and here we are again having to fight against this injustice. Putting a carcinogenic body burner close to a residential community with known hazardous carcinogens is not appropriate for this area even if it is next to a predominately African American neighborhood. There are substantial negative environmental impacts of cremation. It takes a lot of energy to heat the crematory to 1650 degrees. It is estimated that the amount of energy required to cremate one body is about the same as driving 500 miles. Additionally, cremations release nitrogen oxides, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, mercury, hydrogen fluoride and hydrogen chloride into the air. Moreover, the DNREC process was flawed. DNREC never gave the residents the courtesy of mail in notifications of the hearing, nor even informing our legislator, Attorney Chris Johnson, former General Counsel to Governor John Carney, of this hearing. Additionally, this community had no chance to hear from the scientists or engineers about the crematorium. You just rammed it down our throats. We expect this from Republicans but not from Democrats. It is quite frankly an outrage. This process would not happen in Greenville where Biden resides. This petition should be rejected out of hand. Attached is some information on the issue of more than hundreds of studies on the hazardous nature of crematoriums.

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/>