

Death Alley Louisiana

Since the 1970's St. Johns and St. James Parishes located within Convent County Louisiana, have fought the plight of pollution extrapolate their community. In the early years, practically upon the onset of recognizing the environmental concerns, this sense of activism was seen as a problematic misconception as these corporations steeped in chemical and chemical reform were growing and seemingly providing employment opportunities to both natives and locals whose drive for good salaries and short commutes was met as opportunities were accessible. The 85 mile stretch, encompassing the Mississippi river and Louisiana land, has and is still home to approximately 150 petrochemical plants along the bank of the Mississippi between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. This is the result of loose zoning, cheap land, and access to a major shipping corridor.

In 1969, Dupont, amidst other corporations, opened a plant to manufacture 'Chloroprene' a derivative of neoprene a synthetic rubber used for alternative goods such as laptop sleeves and wetsuits. The EPA has cited this byproduct as a carcinogen found of high concentrations and as a solid air quality pollutant. In fact, those latter seventies years of exploration by environmentalist concluded that the air surrounding the Mississippi River was or poor quality and abusively odorous. This contaminated air also carried the potential for distributing 4x's the standard set by the EPA for greenhouse gas emissions in the New Orleans region which overtime plagued its community with the plausible biological side effects consistent with increasing rates of death from cancer, respiratory illnesses and autoimmune disease.

This slight misstep of blatant side effects and health issues did not stave off the insertion of more than 200 petrochemical industries contribution to bad health and living conditions of those born and rared throughout this hazardous zone. In fact, it has long since gained recognition as 'Cancer Alley, The National Zone of Sacrifice, and now, Coronavirus Alley. April of 2020 St. John the Baptist Parish held the highest per capita COVID-19 death rate. It's 1/3rd African American population accounts for a suggested 55% of COVID deaths. This of course is directly attributable to the plausible 'weakened' state of the locals biological systems which have costly be exposed to the continued stream of 'bad' air quality.

The Stated Problems

Back in 1972 I am sure the mere vision of a mound of oil drums near the Baton Rouge Refinery along the river was believed to be short lived as a harmless landing spot for waste which would eventually be removed. Today this eyesore still presents as a reminder of the historical fight to rid of cancer and the cancer causing contaminants filtering the Louisiana air effectuate the

locals of each surrounding Parish. Both wards consist primarily of African Americans and as host to 50% of color population having 20.7% living impoverished and at risk. In 2002, it was disclosed that LA(Louisiana) has the second highest death rate from cancer at a rate of 237 per 100,000 deaths. This however did not substantiate the claim of pollution as cancer alley's death rate, despite an overwhelming volume of stomach cancer, diabetes, heart disease,within this industrial corridor, is not higher than the rest of the state. In 2014, the National Air Toxics Assessment reported a 95% higher risk than most Americans to suffer relative illness. And as the EPA standard of measure indicates the rate of air pollution cancer is 700x's greater in Cancer Alley, there is still a stagnation in implementing preventive measure to insure better health for the citizenry who remain in the area.

These chemical plants which are cited with processes that turn fossil fuels into plastic products are hence distributing at least 30,000 tons of annual emissions as it is speculatively the range of 'biological change'. This could only be proven utilizing the air quality index as for EPA regulating primary particulate emissions and precursors to secondary emissions of elements such as NOx, sulfur, and ammonia. Stating that this populace is 'at risk' and has been for two decades, is a problem stemming from the rational PM 2.5 and PM 10 EPA set standards of concentrations in urban air and out of compliance with the 'Clean Air Act'. These chemicals, dust, allergens, smoke, and soil in the form of microscopic solids, gases, or liquids are released as fossil fuels burn for the production of energy or mobility generate as particulate matter [PM2.5] in it's standardized size pollutant particles.

As fine structures and additive toxins, they can penetrate your lungs and pass directly into your blood stream as there presents the lowered heart function, wheezing or coughing, throat, nose, or eye irritation, and shortness of breath. It is not just the circulation throughout the community as a mode of health risk as it simultaneously equally deminished the health also of those employed with these corporation subjected to the outcome of being inundated with hundreds of different chemicals emitted directly within such fields.

Organized Environmentalist Bodies

One of the key components is Solidarity in this fight for the survival of their communities has circumvented into a host of organized bodies who have effectively succumbed their obstacles and successfully contained the prospect of new constructions that would serve to further compromise the local health and welfare of Louisianians.

Direct Pollution As Documented

Let's take a quick review of actually occurrences which define the level of risk each resident incurs daily under the subjection of chemical land and air contamination. Convent county has bore the burden of several forms of direct and indirect contact with hazardous chemical leakage and waste documented:

1. Cordea Vista reported ninety accidental chemical releases 1995
2. Conoco [Cordea Vista] Lake Charles has 39 reported accidents 1994

3. Company was charged in 1997 with contaminating local ground water supplies having released a human 'carcinogen' into a local stream

4. 1999 hundreds of unskilled laborers filed suit against Condea Vista exposure EDC while cleaning underground pipeline spills of ethylene dichloride

The Imposition of Building New Chemical Facilities: Battles Won

1. In 1992 Formosa, a Taiwanese company, was convinced to build a new rayon and pulp plant elsewhere.

2. In 1996, companies such as Shinetech, offer the construction of three new manufacturing plants for polyvinyl chloride [PVC].

3. In 1998 they withdrew there bid flushed with legal battles with Tulane and Sierra legal defense club. Tulane sued Louisiana Chemical Association for violating air pollution laws. As a strike against them, LCS installed a ban from hiring Tulane graduates. A small sacrifice for such a great win.

Historical Relevance

Dupont sold its company to Denka, a Japanese firm, in 2015. At the time, this was the only U.S. plant producing Neoprene/ Chlorprene. It is dually noted the intensity of the market for products distributed globally by such corporations to manufacture as they are of relatively high demand from the public in the form of items such as smartphones and televisions. This in itself is a stronghold for these industry's despite the great distance fumes and water pollution travels harming those in close proximity. And outside of the market place, there is the nature of business and how it's done within this country, outside of it's borders, and when relating to foreign businesses steeped in following U.S. restrictions while aligning with our federal policies and those foreign corporation [from abroad] protected through these same federal policies which also shift the natural balance and most often restricts 'people' from resolving these situation at times to a much greater extent.

All occuring as the air pollutants disband and take their daily toll upon the environment. Such a 'welcome' dynamic form of industrial progress breath's life through product development and takes life within this same breath.

Thus, the best question is what are effective types of reform that can be implemented to appease both interest? Implementing systems toward changing the air we breath in 'specific air infiltration' to counter-balance the pollutants, constructing ground barriers to absolve leakage and seepage if and when it occurs, or moving all out of this place they've known all their life may best alter unhealty outcomes? As these are just a simple few thoughts we all may have conceived, there seems to be no other recourse but in erasing the thought of 'big

businesses' interest with newly aligned construction plans and making the state and government responsible for those affected 'medical' care. How crude it seems!

In addition, my recent review of census data for the Convent district housing St. James and St. Johns Parish suggest a loss of it's population over the past twenty years. **(table 1)** And other resources state an approximation of 154 constituents living within a 1 mile radius of this infectious zone and 1,660 well within a 2 mile radius. It is not clear how much housing construction has been slated specifically for beyond a 5 mile point as most of the areas citizenry reside along this point of distinction.

The pollution issue has presented since the 70's as I've recounted earlier and therefore serves as a source of measurement of discontentment hindering growth as the health matters and the assertion of 'cancer' causing plants ignited. Clearly however, we see a drop in the small surrounding populace as almost half the county either passed away or shifted their living locations.

The population census data for Convent hence St. James Parish offers a fluctuation that in reporting as follows:

Population Data Convent County

year	1990	2000	2010
population count	618	623	467

Table: 1

The locals are presumed to have remained within this region of Louisiana as land owners and employees. This suggest a level of risk has been taken to sustain the intentions in their fight for 'respect' and preservation of life. However, it does not denote the 'problem' as more urgent then their cause as the local body remains present despite the conditions they are living under. Though not unusual it is a point of interest as to why not abandon the land especially if they hold the actual property deed which should be clear and free even from intervention of the state itself.

Also, is the notion of employees who travel to and from the 'Cancer Alley' corporations and how they live during their term of employment. There is no accountability for their measures of protection from the same plausible biological illnesses which impact the surrounding communities. One wonders if they all typically choose to live beyond the 5 mile border as most others or rather utilize a system of periodic turn over to limit the sense of biological compromise suspected of generating the side affects that taunt the locals as if 'It's No Crime'.

Current Organized Bodies In Louisiana

March 2019 leader held non-violent protest to pressure these industrial giants and government to stop ongoing poisoning of majority black communities and this ongoing silent genocide. There exist a host of bodies through which we can join if interested in becoming an activist in the New Orleans area or throughout the U.S.. Human Rights, religion, civil rights, environmental and community justice are well worth the fight!

Louisiana Bucket Brigade	Extinction Rebellion New Orleans
Sierra Club	Center for Biological Diversity
350NewOrleans.org	Tulane legal Defense aid
The Climate Reality Project	Concerned Citizens of St. Johns

Activist Groups For 'Cancer Alley'

**As most necessary, my desire is to always share dated information regarding the topics I write about in an effort to inform others. I put forth questions to a couple of the agencies outlined within this articles data base but assumably due to COVID-19 and factors revolving around most people working and performing social organization task in a 'remote' fashion, there is a unspecified elongated waiting period of time in obtaining valued data to support and further the content of my articles and hence work. This was one such occasion, however, at some point I shall include my findings, which I regard as pertinent material, as a blog blurb of interest for my readers.

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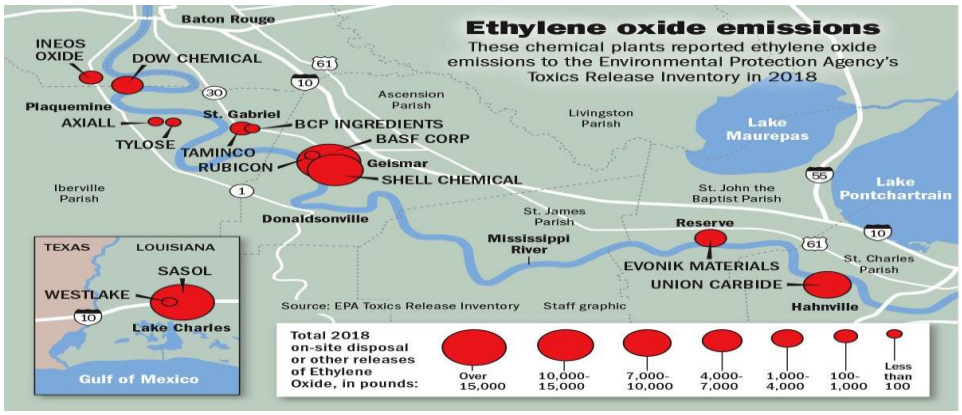

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