



THE WOOD PELLET INDUSTRY IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL INJUSTICE

Pellets In Environmental Justice Communities

The wood pellet export market that has taken off in the past few years is just another polluting, land degrading industry that hinders sustainable economic development in rural communities.

Across the South, the most vulnerable communities have been targeted by the wood pellet industry. Several chapters of the NAACP have opposed wood pellet production facilities in their communities, with one chapter stating that a nearby facility was “a clear cut example of environmental racism.” [1]

Our Analysis Shows Discrimination

We wanted to see if wood pellet facilities were being placed in economically disadvantaged areas of the southern US, so we pulled together demographics of the south alongside wood pellet facility locations. In the Carolinas, every single wood pellet production facility is located in an environmental justice (EJ) community. **Overall, EJ communities are twice as likely to have a wood biomass pellet production facility than other communities.**

Focus on Richmond County, North Carolina

Richmond County is the latest example of an EJ community facing a wood pellet facility. The community that will be affected by the plant is already dealing with the negative impacts of several other polluting industries. According to the EPA’s EJSCREEN tool, the **impacted neighborhoods are already in the 70-90th percentiles for traffic proximity, Superfund site proximity, ozone, PM 2.5, air toxics cancer risk, and diesel particulate matter** among low-income, minority communities in the United States.

“Our community is already dealing with a lot of problems, and Enviva is only going to make it worse” -- Debra David, Concerned Citizens of Richmond County [2]



Quick Facts

- The Enviva plant is the beneficiary of \$1.7 million in state and local tax credit subsidies. [3]
- Local and state officials neglected to inform residents of the detrimental effects of wood pellet production to human health, well-being, and the environment.
- NCDEQ never held a public hearing. [4]
- Though taxpayers will fund this facility, there has been no opportunity for public input.
- Local county commissioners have repeatedly denied residents the opportunity to speak publicly before the commission. [5]

The fight to stop the injustice is ongoing -- you can visit dogwoodalliance.org/nc-forest-action/ to voice your concerns to the governor and help stop this plant.

References

1. <http://bit.ly/2vC84eq>
2. <http://bit.ly/2xbyqVq> | <http://bit.ly/2vBQml3>
3. <http://bit.ly/2vBV0G5>
4. <http://bit.ly/2icoTe8>
5. <http://bit.ly/2vBUXdx>

Below: Wood pellet production facilities are twice as likely to occur in or near environmental justice (EJ) communities. EJ communities are communities below the state median income with at least 25% non-white population.

