

**For immediate release
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Contact: Hold Erie Coke Accountable
For Information Contact: Sr. Pat Lupo
814-490-3108 plupo@neighborhoodarthouse.org

Erie Coke Plant Community Impact Update

Erie, PA - Hold Erie Coke Accountable (HECA) is partnering with the Group Against Smog and Pollution (GASP) to update the public on Erie Coke's ongoing violations and the high stakes impact for Erie's quality of life and prosperity.

A free and open to the public event, "Erie Coke Plant Community Impact Update" will occur on Tuesday, April 16, 2019, 6:30 to 8:00 pm at the East Middle School Auditorium, 1001 Atkins St. Erie, PA.

A panel of environmental scientists will address Erie Coke's operation and impact on air quality, water quality, and soil contamination. Also discussed will be the recent closing of Erie Coke's sister plant in Tonawanda, NY, and insights to the on-going enforcement actions by the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on the plant on Erie's waterfront.

Principal presenters will be Mike Campbell Ph.D., Mercyhurst Professor, Science and Biology who researches water quality issues and Michelle Homan Ph.D., Gannon Professor, Environmental Science and Engineering researcher who tackles air quality concerns, both are HECA core members. Representing the Group Against Smog and Pollution (GASP) will be Rachel Filippini, Executive Director, and Ned Mulcahy, Staff Attorney who will review regulatory affairs specific to coke facilities and their impacts relative to a healthy population, environment, and economy with insights on how GASP works to hold polluters and regulators accountable.

Regulatory offenses by Erie Coke continue even as the plant has re-applied for its federal operating permit. Currently levied by the PA Department of Environmental Protection are 53 infractions comprising an administrative order to be addressed as part of the permit review process. At issue is Erie Coke's impact on clean air, water, soil, fish, and the residents of Erie who are working to position Erie as a great place to live, work and play.

Hold Erie Coke Accountable (HECA) is a non-profit, non-partisan citizens and community initiative, inspired by the civic resolve that Erie's rise as a leading 21st Century city of choice rides on high quality of life and a healthy environment, requiring that the Erie Coke Plant be held accountable to operate in a safe and violation free manner for the safety of all. To learn more visit: Facebook: HECA, Hold Erie Coke Accountable, *or* www.holderiecokeaccountable.com.

Group Against Smog and Pollution (GASP) is a non-profit citizens group in Southwestern Pennsylvania working for a healthy, sustainable environment. Founded in 1969, GASP has been a diligent watchdog, educator, litigator, and policy-maker on many environmental issues.

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