

Hello,

My name is Alona Steinke. I worked as an RN for 41 years, mostly as a pediatric nurse. I cared for many children with asthma. I remember, sadly, a lovely 14 year old girl who died of asthma as we ran out of treatment options for her.

As an asthmatic, I'm familiar with the frightening chest tightness and shortness of breath that comes with the constriction of the airway.

Coal dust contains particulates, sulfur dioxide, ozones, heavy metals, benzene, etc. It pollutes the air we breathe. This pollution causes inflammation, chronic congestion and bronchitis, and more frequent asthma attacks.

It's also more than just the coal dust that's a problem. Diesel emissions are a terrible health hazard. The toxic gases and microscopic particles of diesel exhaust are drawn deeply into the lungs. It contains among other things, arsenic, benzene, formaldehyde, and nickel. These substances can cause cancer by creating cell mutations. Exposure to diesel exhaust also causes inflammation in the lungs, aggravating chronic respiratory symptoms and increasing the intensity of asthma attacks. The elderly, children, and those with chronic heart and lung disease are especially affected.

We've spent millions of dollars in the last decade to clean up our air in order to protect our health. Does it seem reasonable then to allow 1000 additional locomotives per week to pull dirty, leaking coal trains down our scenic Columbia River Gorge and through our towns spewing their poisons into the air we breathe?

Won't the increase in hospital admissions, ER visits, increased asthma attacks and premature deaths be extremely costly? According to EPA for every \$1 spent reducing diesel emissions, we'd save \$4 in health care costs.

I urge you to thoroughly study the added cost of health care that can be attributed to the additional coal trains, locomotives, ships, and tugs. As a condition of the permit, shouldn't Ambre and Arch be required to pay these costs?