

My name is Heidi xxxx, I reside at 2273 N. Schlegel Rd., Lena, Illinois. I live 2 1/4 miles as the crow flies from an ethanol plant that was built a little over a year ago that produces 40 mmgy.

Our experience - We were promised a State-Of-The-Art plant with the latest technology. The technology is great for production of ethanol, does nothing to protect citizens from their emissions. The plant officials stated the plant would be zero effluent. Since the ethanol plant began operation, we pray everyday that the wind blows their effluence away from our home.

The pollutants emitted by these plants contain hazardous compounds. Many citizens experienced reactions rather quickly from breathing the air that was saturated with these emissions. Symptoms were burning eyes, lungs, and throat, you'd get headaches, cramps in your sides and feel nauseous. These symptoms occur with scrubbers as the control technology. I have had these symptoms firsthand from just seconds of exposure and the feed dryer was not operating.

It is very costly to run pollution control devices. These companies save a lot of money if they are not using the best and maximum available control technology. The ethanol plant near my home is still in the process of trying to get into compliance. Their plant does not have an operational permit to date.

If this is the direction you want your community to go, I strongly suggest that you have ambient air quality and ground water quantity tests done before the plant is built and in operation. These plants use a tremendous amount of water everyday. Get a baseline of your air quality now so you will know what impact they are having on your community. Put odor restrictions on the plant to protect the residents within 2-3 miles of the plant. Be informed of the permitting process. The applicant is responsible for figuring and submitting information on their pollution permit application. In most cases the ethanol plant hires the emission test contractor. That means the fox is watching the hen house. Know what they are applying for and be aware of how they intend to control their emissions.

You will only be hurting yourselves if you proceed without doing your homework. Talk to the people who already live with these plants. You will probably hear they got the same script you are hearing today; state-of-the-art facility, bring jobs to the community, this plant will be different than the old ethanol plants, etc.

These plants smell and will set a precedence in their home communities that might prevent clean businesses from joining the community. Be prepared to have restrictions on when you can have your windows open. The only times you are safe is when you're upwind from the plant. Schools should be at least 5 miles away from any ethanol plant.

If I had another opportunity, I would do what I could to prevent an ethanol plant anywhere near where I live. Thank you.