

Baltimore needs a Clean Air Ordinance!

Baltimore suffers from poor air quality and the health problems that come with it. Our city is home to the state's largest trash incinerator (Wheelabrator Baltimore), and the nation's largest medical waste incinerator (Curtis Bay Energy).

Wheelabrator Baltimore is the city's largest polluter, responsible for 36% of all industrial air pollution in the city! It's the city's #1 air polluter for mercury, lead, chromium, benzo[a]pyrene, hydrochloric acid, formaldehyde, sulfur dioxides, and nitrogen oxides.

Nitrogen oxides (NOx) trigger asthma attacks. Baltimore's childhood asthma rate is twice the national average, impacting 1 in 5 children. Wheelabrator is responsible for a whopping 57% of the city's industrial NOx pollution! If they closed, it would be equivalent to talking half of the cars or half of the trucks off of the city's roads.



Curtis Bay Energy burns medical waste from 20 states and Canada, releasing unnecessary pollution in the process. It's one of fewer than 30 medical waste incinerators remaining in the U.S. In the past two decades, over 2,300 have been replaced by safer alternatives.

Maryland law authorizes Baltimore City to adopt stricter air pollution laws than the state and federal minimums.¹

The **Baltimore Clean Air Ordinance** would require large waste incinerators to:

- use modern technology to continuously monitor their toxic air pollution
- disclose that pollution information on a public website, real-time, for all to see
- install the most protective air pollution controls by 2022

This would force these two large incinerators to clean up or close down.

In 2017, Baltimore City Council has adopted three resolutions, all aiming at moving away from incineration and toward zero waste:

- Zero Waste resolution, adopted June 5th
- Climate resolution, adopted June 19th
- Nitrogen oxide resolution, adopted October 16th

The last resolution calls on the state to set a standard for nitrogen oxide pollution from trash incinerators as strict as the requirements set for new incinerators. The state is unlikely to do this, but Baltimore City can do so with a Baltimore Clean Air Ordinance.

Zero Waste Alternatives: Most of the nation has moved away from incineration. The city can produce far more jobs in a healthier way, by reducing, reusing, recycling and composting trash. The city should end its use of Wheelabrator when the contract expires at the end of 2021, and has four years to build alternatives to minimize the use of our landfill space.

For more information, please contact Mike Ewall with any questions:
215-436-9511 or mike@energyjustice.net

¹ Md. ENVIRONMENT Code § 2-104.

