

Mr. Conger,

I am trying to bring attention to an issue that has been ignored across the country and could soon blow up just like the Flint Michigan situation.

What is it? General Aviation Airports

Many small towns have been fighting their local City Governments, Tx.dot and FAA to follow the laws that Congress put in place to protect the health of humans and the environment. We, citizens of Georgetown, TX have sent many documents, hotline complaints, trips to WA, hundreds of documents to all gov't parties involved (Federal/State/Local) with no help or progress. I personally went to Washington to meet with our Congressman. I had a set meeting and when I arrived I was told Congressman Carter was in the office but under the weather and could not meet me. I met with his Chief of Staff in the hallway for 30 minutes. Sad I flew all the way to Washington and "my" Congressman couldn't step out of his office to meet me on this issue. He had been sent many documents showing the violations. I proceed on and met with the CEQ office (over NEPA regulations). Again nothing has happen except for making the laws less strict (giving local offices more loop holes to get out of doing Environmental Impact Statements prior to being awarded Federal funds for airport improvement projects).

These airports are being allowed to do the following:

1. Use Federal Funds to expand local airports that are smack in the middle of the city where they are surrounded by schools, churches, and hundreds of neighborhoods. They discretely say they are not expanding, but in reality they are Increasing fuel tanks by 60%, buy or force residents to sell their land, segment projects in order to avoid having to do an Environmental Impact Statement, and continue to violate NEPA laws that Congress put in place! Our airport has been getting away with this for 37 years. They have been fined due to underground fuel leaks, which sit "right on top of the The **Edwards Aquifer**, a unique groundwater system and one of the most prolific artesian **aquifers** in the world. It is one of the greatest natural resources on Earth, serving the diverse agricultural, industrial, recreational, and domestic needs of almost two million users in south central Texas.

2. Even worse, in 2011 Duke University completed a study showing that "Leaded aviation gasoline (which most GA airports use) was linked to elevated levels of toxic metal in children living nearby GA airports. Dangerous side effects include a long list, both for children and adults! One study linked ADHD to elevated levels of lead in children as well as other behavior problems, gastro, lower IQ's, etc. The State Health Dept. states "ANY" amount of lead in children is "NOT" safe. It's worse for children since their bodies absorb the lead faster since they are growing. In adults it listed many medical conditions including Dementia! EPA has known about this since 2011 (maybe earlier) but yet "NO" warning has ever been put out to make citizens aware of the potential dangers of living within 500-1500 meters of a GA airport. Cases of elevated lead levels have occurred in our areas near the airport. I have spoken to the

State Health Dept. about this and they were rather surprised and unaware of the dangers. They asked me to send them any documentation related to the lead poisoning. I did. As families have begun getting tested for lead levels who live around the airport, even the questionnaire that is being asked to be filled out doesn't even mention "living nearby an General Aviation airport which still uses leaded gasoline." I added it to my questionnaire and made a copy of it. Just in my neighborhood alone we have several ADHD cases, Brain tumors, Dementia, and Cancer! This is outrageous!

3. What should EPA be doing to prevent what just happened in Michigan:

- Examine all Federal Grants and STOP them until they have done proper Environmental Impact Statements and Studies. We have allowed our local /state authorities to falsely determine that "no significant impact" to humans or the environment is occurring on projects they are being given Federal Grant money. Our city officials have refused all our requests as citizens to protest their "no significant impact" decisions and have refused to get the public involved. They were finally forced to hold their first public hearing in the last 37 years! Children and adults are being poisoned by lead and they get away with saying, "no significant impact!?!?" What is EPA's role anymore?? Citizens are losing all confidence in EPA. It's sad.

Another violation is all the segmentation of projects going on. They segment one item like our airport did, removing underground fuel tanks and replacing them with above ground tanks. Sound like a safe thing to do since the Director said it was being done because the old ones were leaking. So they take this project and call it a safety/maint. project which has "no significant impact" to the environment or to humans. Here's the violation:

- They failed to explain that they were increasing the size of the new fuel tanks by 60% to hold more fuel to support increased operations and support larger aircraft. Excuse me, please tell me how that got through as having "no significant impact" to the environment or human health???

- They conveniently segmented this one project and stuck 23 other projects under it which is known as using a Categorical Exclusion. Segment one project out and apply the Categorical Exclusion policy which says you may use federal funds to improve an existing condition without having to complete and Environmental Impact Statement. (and sneaking in 23 other projects under that CE clause). This if I remember is called segmenting. Not allowed.

- And the worse part is the Fuel Farm (new tanks) doesn't legally fall into the CE clause anyway due to them "expanding" the tanks by 60% to allow for increased operations!

* Another example of a project which was categorically excluded: The city requested by its July 2015 letter to TxDOT for strengthening RW 18-36 to a pavement design capable of accommodating a doubling of total aircraft weight from its current 60,000 lb single wheel load design to 120,000 lb single wheel design or 150,000 lb dual wheel design, but our city leaders have never acknowledged that request to the public.

- The last Noise study was done in 2001, 15 years ago. Since then the number of operations has tripled (take off/landings). Again why has our pleas of human safety been ignored?? The only noise sensitive program in place (Fly Friendly Program) has never been enforced. Pilots buzz over roof tops constantly out of the flight path even with continued complaints from the community.

I am urging you to forward this on to the right people including, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy. Be proactive on this and don't make another mistake. We are moving forward in getting press attention on this. I'm giving you heads up to react. A large group of Georgetown citizens are tired of getting no support and will do whatever it takes to protect our HEALTH! Take a look around, NJ, Oregon, CA and other small towns are growing in numbers fighting these exact same issues. We are working with some of these other airports in different states. It's needs your attention now!

I realize an alternative fuel can't be developed over night, but YOU do have the authority to immediately enforce Environmental Impact Statements/Studies to be done on all Federal Grants being awarded to these airports that involve a possible impact to human health or the environment. And you are obligated to "Inform" the public of potential health hazards to their way of life and where they live. This link of leaded avgas to children's health is horrible and it's even worse that we were never warned about it. My husband and I raised our boys for the past 18 years here and promoted outdoor play all their lives. Now to find out we may have been contaminating them with lead for years is very upsetting to us and many other families.

Thank you Mr. Conger for at least listening to our concerns,

Georgetown, TX 78628