

For Immediate Release

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STATEMENT ON DRAFT AIR QUALITY RULE'S IMPACT ON PUBLIC HEALTH IN PENNSYLVANIA

By Arthur Stamoulis, Director of Government Affairs, Clean Air Council

"The Environmental Protection Agency is once again going out of its way to relax pollution reduction requirements for big energy companies. It has drafted regulations that would allow old, dirty power plants to upgrade their facilities without having to install up-to-date pollution controls. These older plants are among the worst polluters in the entire country, producing drastically more pollution than their modern counterparts.

"This is an especially serious issue in Pennsylvania, and will have a negative impact on public health in the state. These new rules have the potential to derail Pennsylvania's enforcement actions against some of the state's worst polluters. If the existing environmental protections are dismantled, Pennsylvanians will end up breathing in more cancer-causing soot than they would otherwise have to. That spells more asthma attacks, more missed work days, more premature deaths.

"If the Bush administration was serious about protecting public health, it would be doing everything it could to force these old power plants from the 1940s, 50s and 60s to install modern pollution controls. Instead, the administration is rewriting the rules so that the electric industry can continue avoiding pollution reductions. The technology to control pollution from power plants is readily available. People deserve to breathe clean air."

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Clean Air Council is a statewide environmental organization, founded in 1967 to protect everyone's right to breathe clean, healthful air.