

Kathleen M Yapuncich, MD
162 Kruse Creek Rd.
Sheridan, WY 82801



March 17, 2015

Mr. Steven A. Dietrich
Administrator, DEQ/AQD
Herschler Building 2-E
122 W. 25th Street
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002

Dear Administrator Dietrich:

I am a board certified practicing pediatrician. I received my medical degree from Creighton University School of Medicine and have worked most of my career as a pediatrician for the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. I currently practice pediatric medicine across the state of Wyoming. I am concerned about the health of Wyoming's children due to air pollution. Reducing ozone pollution is critical to protecting health and I am writing to ask the Environmental Quality Council to adopt the proposed Upper Green River Basin existing source regulations in Section 6 of the Wyoming Air Quality Standards and Regulations, Chapter 8, Nonattainment Area Regulations.

As a pediatrician, I am keenly aware of the overwhelming evidence demonstrating how air pollution adversely impacts the health of children. Children are more susceptible to the negative effects of air pollution for many reasons. In the prenatal period, poor air quality contributes to miscarriage, prematurity and low birth weight and can be compared to the effects of second-hand tobacco smoke. Children tend to have increased exposure to pollutants as they spend more time outdoors than adults. They have higher rates of breathing than adults at baseline and this is increased further with vigorous activity. Children tend to breathe through their mouths and thus lose the filtering functions of the nose. They have smaller airways and immature lungs, nervous, endocrine and immune systems. Children who live with polluted air have more upper respiratory tract infections and higher rates of asthma. In addition, asthmatics in areas with poor air quality have more serious symptoms than those who have asthma in areas with better air quality thus requiring more medication and the resulting side effects.

Cumulative exposure to ozone affects children as they get older and health problems due to ozone pollution persist into adulthood resulting in increased illness throughout a lifetime. Exposure also decreases life expectancy. A report by the Wyoming Department of Health has documented a rise in clinic visits in Sublette County due to increased ozone levels.

It is not too late to change the course of children's lives in Wyoming. New studies have demonstrated that improving air quality also improves lung function in children. Studies have also shown that improving air quality decreases morbidity and mortality in adults as well.

Air pollution problems in the Upper Green River Basin can be attributed to the oil and gas industry. With the EPA considering new, stricter ozone regulations, the Wyoming Environmental Quality Council should

look to proactively address ozone pollution in Wyoming and get in front of the proposed lower federal standards.

I urge the Environmental Quality Council to make the health of Wyoming children a top priority and adopt the proposed Upper Green River Basin existing source regulations in Section 6 of the Wyoming Air Quality Standards and Regulations, Chapter 8, Nonattainment Area Regulations. Improving air quality saves money by reducing hospital admissions, emergency room visits and missed school and work. While the proposed rule changes are steps in the right direction, we should also seriously look at expanding these efforts statewide and ensure protection for all Wyoming residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathleen M Yapuncich', written in a cursive style.

Kathleen M Yapuncich, MD