

Episode 26: August 26, 2022, PM 2.5 levels detected by PurpleAir Monitors, sparking a public hearing August 30, 2022, regarding permit renewal for the Georgia Renewable Power (G R P) (wood-burning) plant in Madison County, Georgia, Mary noted that, as reported on August 24, 2022, in Madison County, Georgia, a local citizens' group is saying Madison County residents need to pay attention to particulate matter from Georgia Renewable Power (GRP). By May 2020 two Purple Air PM 2.5 Monitors had been purchased and installed by Madison County Clean Power Coalition in response to the burning of creosote treated rail ties by Georgia Renewable Power's Madison Plant (GRP). On January 25, 2020, a group of citizens took to the street to protest pollution from the Georgia Renewable Power (GRP) plant in Colbert, Georgia in Madison County. On August 4, 2020, the Georgia Governor signed H B 857 into law, outlawing the use of creosote-treated wood products as a fuel source for electricity generated at GRP, thanks to efforts of the citizens of Madison, Franklin, Oglethorpe, Hart, Elbert, Stephens, Clarke, and surrounding areas in Georgia. Although creosote is no longer an issue, a public hearing will be held Aug. 30, 2022, with the Environmental Protection Division regarding the renewal of Georgia Renewable Power's (GRP) permit and regarding the wood-burning power plant's high level of emissions of PM 2.5 particulate matter. PM 2.5 is particulate matter of 2.5 micrometer or micron size, the perfect size to infiltrate the human lung, causing a cascade of human health problems. PM 2.5 also contributes to climate change. Three health and biophysical medicine scientists living in Madison County voiced their concerns in a letter to the editor in 2019. Letters to the editor regarding GRP have included the phrases "citizens are not expendable", "GRP neighbors are not expendable", "A number of neighboring property owners feel like their health and quality of life are being negatively impacted", "There is the smell and the soot", "A new, young employee was the first fuel-yard worker to complain" and "Instead of going to the mat to protect health and safety, local leaders are offering tours of GRP"