

Episode 56iE August 31, 2023. Ahoskie, North Carolina & Gloster, Mississippi taking on Drax pollution at wood pellet factories.

Nevada

<https://www.wnct.com/news/protesters-block-road-into-burning-man-festival-rangers-ram-blockade/>

Protesters block road into Burning Man festival; rangers ram blockade

[Protesters block road into Burning Man festival; rangers ram blockade - WNCT](#)

WNCT

Created in 1986 on a San Francisco beach, the festival gets its name from the culminating ceremony: the burning of a large wooden effigy referred

August 30, 2023

Burning Man is a festival that takes place in the Nevada desert

Protesters put up a blockade on the road in, causing a traffic jam

Videos show police ramming the blockade and arresting activists

([NewsNation](#)) — Climate activists caused a miles-long traffic jam when they blocked the only road leading into the Burning Man festival in the Nevada desert.

Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates

Videos posted online show activists using a trailer to block the road that leads into Black Rock City. One video shows a white pickup truck appearing to be from the Pyramid Lake Ranger Station crashing through the barricade set up by protesters. The blockade led to clashes with motorists and tribal rangers, the [Los Angeles Times reported](#). Pyramid Lake is a tribal law enforcement agency. Seven Circles, said the purpose of the blockade was to draw attention to “capitalism’s inability to address climate and ecological breakdown,” [according to a news release](#). Seven Circles said Burning Man has been commodified by “affluent people who do not live the stated values” of the festival.

the festival gets its name from the ceremony: the burning of a large wooden effigy referred to as the Man. Seven Circles criticized Burning Man for what it said was insufficient steps to achieve “carbon negativity and ecological regeneration for Black Rock City by 2030.” The group put forward demands for Burning Man, including banning private jets, single-use plastics and unnecessary propane burning. “The group believes that Burning Man’s apolitical stance to date is detrimental to its claimed values, especially as carbon emissions continue to rise” Seven Circles said.

North Carolina, Ahoskie

[https://www.resilience.org/stories/2023-08-25/the-wood-pellet-industry-a-dual-threat-to-poor-rural-communities/?fbclid=Energy featured](https://www.resilience.org/stories/2023-08-25/the-wood-pellet-industry-a-dual-threat-to-poor-rural-communities/?fbclid=Energy%20featured)

The Wood Pellet Industry: A Dual Threat to Poor, Rural Communities

originally published by Resilience.org

August 25, 2023

Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates

Debra David is mad: “I know this a money thing, but my health is more important than money.”

Carbon-neutral? Countries in Europe and Asia are desperate to meet their climate goals, and using wood-based fuel like pellets is widely considered a way to make electricity without releasing any carbon into the atmosphere.

What magical process makes this possible, despite the fact that wood pellets, when burned, emit more CO2 than coal? It’s not a magic trick. It’s an accounting trick, and it’s endorsed by international climate bodies like the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and written into the EU’s Renewable Energy Directive. Consequently, signatories to the Paris Climate Agreement can classify woody biomass as carbon neutral, in effect pretending they are fixing the problem of climate change while actually making it worse. The scheme goes like this: When a forest is cut down in the US it’s considered a carbon debt. So, to avoid counting the debt twice, the pellets produced from that forest can be burned in say, the UK, without emitting any CO2 at all—at least according to the carbon ledger sheet. The carbon was already supposedly emitted when the trees were cut down back in the US. When the forest is replanted, we have theoretically generated electricity using a carbon-neutral system. Unfortunately, all too often the forests are not replanted. And even when they are, it may take decades before the new trees are back to sequestering as much carbon as the ones that were cut down. The fact is, cutting down trees and burning them is not, as the pellet industry claims, fighting climate change, but rather accelerating it. Still, massive government subsidies are propelling manufacturers to aggressively expand

production. Some of these chemicals (emitted from wood pellet plants) can be toxic or carcinogenic, even in small amounts. Residents are also breathing what scientists call PM2.5, a pernicious dust so fine that it can lodge in the lungs and enter the bloodstream, aggravating asthma and causing heart attacks. Despite somewhat lax standards in many southern states, pellet companies have been caught multiple times exceeding their allowed emissions. Three of the four Enviva facilities in North Carolina have been cited in recent years for air quality infractions. One plant in Sampson County has been found in violation of pollution standards at least five times since 2017. A Two-pronged Attack. People who live near these plants are being assailed on two fronts. First, they face health challenges stemming from the PM2.5 pollution. Second, cutting down forests and burning pellets is accelerating climate change, which disproportionately affects these underserved communities.

Mississippi, Gloster

<https://www.nbcnews.com/science/environment/mississippi-community-takes-uk-energy-giant-pollution-concerns-rcna97385?ms=>

A Mississippi community takes on a U.K. energy giant over pollution concerns. Drax Group has been the subject of years of effort by local residents, environmentalists, and state regulators to rein in emissions from its Gloster wood pellet plant. Some are running out of patience. Drax's wood pellet plant in Gloster, Miss. Google Maps.

Aug. 6, 2023.

Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates.

During the last weeks of July, a handful of residents from Gloster, a majority-Black, low-income community in southwest Mississippi, prepared for a meeting with Drax Group, a U.K.-based energy company that operates a wood pellet production plant in the small town.

The residents planned to present the company with a list of demands meant to address their concerns about the plant's industrial pollution. Priority items on the list included installing PM2.5 air quality monitors within a quarter-mile of the facility. But the meeting, like the one before it scheduled for June 2022, was canceled by the company. "We weren't really expecting them to answer any of our questions anyways," said Krystal Martin, a Gloster native and a community leader. "We just want to see action from Drax." The canceled meeting is the latest in what has become a yearslong battle between local activists and Drax. Since the facility's opening in 2016, residents have complained of deteriorating air quality and health, and the state's environmental regulator has twice issued notices to Drax regarding violations of air pollution regulations. The company's Gloster facility is one of many such plants in the American South, [which is the world's wood pellet manufacturing hub](#). Wood pellets have been embraced by European countries in recent years in the movement toward "biomass" or "biofuels" as an alternative to fossil fuels, accelerated by [Russia's invasion of Ukraine](#). Biomass fuels like wood pellets are broadly seen as renewable and carbon-neutral sources of energy, particularly in the European Union, where wood pellets are used mostly for electricity generation and even count toward the E.U.'s renewable energy targets for 2030. In 2022, Drax also received about \$2.2 million a day in U.K. government subsidies to produce clean energy, [according to Sky News](#). In recent years, the biomass industry has [come under increasing scrutiny](#). Many environmental groups argue that wood pellets are even [worse than fossil fuels in terms of releasing carbon emissions](#). [a report](#) from the Rachel Carson Council, an environmental nonprofit, found that burning wood pellets releases 65% more CO2 than coal, which is widely regarded as the dirtiest energy source. (Despite this) Drax (makes) efforts [to market itself as a climate solution](#). environmental justice advocates who say Gloster is another example of [air pollution disproportionately affecting communities of color](#). In September, Katherine Egland, a member of the board of directors of the NAACP, [told Greenpeace](#) that the plant and its U.K. government subsidies were perpetuating "environmental racism" because Gloster is a majority-Black community. Drax told Greenpeace that community safety was a top priority. The March notice of violation to Drax serves only as an allegation, Chris Wells, executive director of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, said "The allegations against Drax have not yet been adjudicated." The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality's next step after issuing the notice and receiving a response is to reach an amicable agreement with the company on the violations, then ultimately decide on the appropriate penalty. If no agreement is reached, the department escalates the matter to the Mississippi Commission on Environmental Quality. Generally, repeat violations mean stronger penalties that may even affect a facility's permit renewal. an attorney working with the Environmental Integrity Project who has been monitoring Drax's emissions since 2017, is skeptical of Drax's commitment to environmental standards. Much of the local frustration stems from a community meeting on May 9, where more than 200 Gloster residents gathered to voice concerns about Drax to several officials from the EPA and the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality. the local community was unaware of the March notice at the time of the meeting and that not one official mentioned it. The notice came to light following the

meeting after Anderson submitted a request for records through the Freedom of Information Act. a program director with Dogwood Alliance, an environmental nonprofit that has been working with the Gloster community since 2019, said that the state agencies' responses have been "inadequate." At the federal level, the EPA is monitoring the situation. In a statement to NBC News, the EPA Region 4 office, which covers Mississippi, said primary enforcement falls to the state, though the agency routinely evaluates state enforcement programs and can engage with individual cases. The EPA declined to comment on its plans regarding the ongoing case. Gloster citizens like Martin are hopeful that their advocacy will bring change to the small town — and they're already planning for their next meeting with Drax. "Some communities don't have to worry about the air they breathe. But we do. And clean air should always be free. We all should have the right to breathe free, clean air."

United States

[EPA approves state request to designate Libby as meeting National Air Quality Standards](#)

KPAX

State and County efforts successfully reduce particulate matter ... According to EPA, the fine particles in PM-2.5 can be inhaled deep into the ...

United States

PM 2.5 refers to particulate matter (solid or liquid droplets) in the air that is less than 2.5 micrometres in diameter.

[Polluted Air Shortens Human Lifespans More Than Tobacco, Study Finds - Slashdot](#)

Slashdot Science

Majority of PM 2.5 from cars comes from tires and brakes rather than combustion. EVs are about a half ton heavier than their ICE counterparts of ...

California, San Francisco

[Spare the Air alert issued for Bay Area as wind pattern draws smoke from wildfires](#)

The Mercury News

A weather pattern creating winds that are funneling smoke from fires burning in Northern California ... Wood burning is prohibited during alerts.

Illinois, Cicero

["The Air We Breathe" event shows initial findings on poor air quality in Cicero - MuckRock](#)

MuckRock

The sensors help measure particulate matter in the air (often abbreviated as ... Illustrative explainer of PM 2.5 and how it can impact health.

Montana, River Road East Fire

[Area fire danger remains 'very high' | Valley Press/Mineral Independent](#)

Clark Fork Valley Press

The smoke was not wood smoke color. It was just lightly sprinkling at the time and I called it in, knowing open burning of debris is not allowed ...

Washington, Spokane

[Man arrested for reckless burning near evacuation zone for Oregon Road Fire - KREM 2](#)

KREM 2

... Jail last Friday for reckless burning. According to deputies, Reid was actively putting wood on the bonfire when they initially contacted him.

United Kingdom, Norwich

[At Norwich's town hall, a failing boiler system has conflict bubbling - Valley News](#)

Valley News

The second boiler, which began emitting smoke last winter, is out of service ... But other residents oppose wood-burning as a long-term solution.

Ukraine

[Russia's kamikaze drones raining down on Ukraine's east - BBC News](#)

BBC

As the Humvee drives deeper into the woods, lumbering over dirt tracks, the trees are on fire - some burning where they stand, others now collapsed ...

India

[Clear Air Would Add 7 Yrs To City Residents' Life | Ludhiana News - Times of India](#)

The Times of India

As per WHO guidelines, PM (particulate matter) 2.5 value in a geographical area should not exceed 5 micrograms per cubic metre.

India, Tamil Nadu (TN)

Tennessee

[Inaction will increase PM 2.5 emission in TN cities by 30%](#)

dtnext

An emissions inventory is a database that lists, by source, the amount of air pollutants discharged into the atmosphere during a year or other ...

Indonesia

[Minister outlines PM 2.5 threats as written in WHO guidelines - ANTARA News](#)

ANTARA News

Indonesian Health Minister Budi Gunadi Sadikin drew attention to the dangers of pollutants with particulate matter (PM) 2.5, for which the maximum ...

Nepal

[Pollution reduces life expectancy of Nepalis by five years - myRepublica - Nagarik Network](#)

myRepublica - Nagarik Network

The data on Particulate Matter (PM) 2.5 collected based on satellites shows that Nepal is the third most-polluted country in the world.

Nepal, Kathmandu

[Toxic air shaving around five years off Nepalis' lives, report shows - The Kathmandu Post](#)

The Kathmandu Post

PM2.5 and human health

[Cut air pollution, add 4 years to your life, reveals study](#)

Deccan Herald

Air pollution is reducing the life expectancy of an average Indian by 5.3 years, but bringing down the fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) to the ...

PM2.5 and human health

[Air quality data show air pollution challenges unequally spread throughout the world](#)

Phys.org

If the world were to permanently reduce fine particulate pollution (PM2.5) to meet the World Health Organization's (WHO) guideline, ...

A letter sent on 8/28/2023 to the Assistant Attorney Generals threatening to sue the EPA over wood stove certification follows.

Dear Assistant Attorney General,

Attached is a letter that was sent to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) Director Dr. Jeanne Marrazzo, former acting NIAID Director Dr. Hugh Auchincloss and National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Dr.

Lawrence Tabak regarding regulation and the ability to shutdown PM2.5 polluting indoor residential wood burners.

PM2.5 pollution is known to cause antibiotic resistance making infectious disease pandemics more likely and uncontrollable.

The letter asks Dr. Marrazzo to apply a "Parallel Track" to indoor residential wood burning pollution in 2023. This "Parallel Track" would include both EPA wood stove certification and a complaint-based system using PurpleAir PM2.5 monitor data collected from the yards of near neighbors of indoor residential wood burners. This would be a way to address the very real impact of PM2.5 pollution which EPA wood stove certification fails to address. We propose that the use of PurpleAir monitors would provide important data on PM2.5 air pollution that is currently missing in the EPA wood stove certification.

This proposal is modeled on the approach Dr. Anthony Fauci used in 1989 that allowed a "Parallel Track" of both the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) use of AZT for AIDS that had the unfortunate side effect of blindness along with a second drug, Ganciclovir, that actually cured the blindness.

An earlier letter sent to your office asked that you include a complaint-based system of regulating indoor residential wood burning using PurpleAir PM2.5 data in your suit against the EPA. Indoor residential wood burners are already ineffectively certified by the EPA. This violates the EPA's own National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) emission limits of 35 micrograms per cubic meter in a 24-hour period. Using data from PurpleAir PM2.5 monitors in the yards of

near neighbors who complain of PM2.5 from hyper-localized indoor residential wood burners would provide the missing and important evidence of this type of air pollution.

Currently if a near neighbor's complaint is made to a local health department, a complaint using federal NAAQS exceedance data is not considered as a basis for a complaint against neighboring indoor residential wood burning. It is also not considered as a basis for shutting down the wood burning appliance when the indoor residential wood stove has been federally EPA certified. Lawsuits for nuisance are expensive and beyond the means of the average American and are not considered precedents in courts generally. Contacting state agencies to shut down polluting wood stove use that affects the health and lives of near neighbors has been unproductive because decisions made by the EPA determine the decisions made by state agencies.

Although the scope of your lawsuit seems confined to asking the EPA to continue their wood stove certification program as is, albeit at a faster pace, we ask that you consider the intent behind asking the EPA to tighten their standards for wood stove certification on a regular basis. The intent of an Environmental Protection Agency is to protect the environment. This has perhaps been narrowly construed to be protecting air, water and ground from contamination from industries only. But United States citizens should actually benefit from this environmental protection as well. Tightening wood stove standards on a regular basis should result in protecting the environment as well as protecting United States citizens from harm from the air, water, and ground. We believe that the EPA's responsibilities are inextricably connected with public health responsibilities of other government agencies such as NIAID.

Please try to accomplish something meaningful for the American people with this lawsuit by considering using a Parallel Track to include PM2.5 data in future decisions about air quality standards. Although I am not your constituent, by commencing to sue a federal agency you are representing me as a citizen of the United States and in that sense as your constituent.

Thank you,

Sent to

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[Hugh.Auchincloss@nih.gov](mailto:Hugh.Auchincloss@nih.gov) January to July 2023 acting Director of National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

Hugh Auchincloss

[Lawrence.Tabak@nih.gov](mailto:Lawrence.Tabak@nih.gov) Director of the National Institutes of Health Lawrence Tabak

<https://rawsepresidents.wordpress.com/1-please-attach-pdf-letter-to-niaid-director-dr-jeanne-marrazzo-to-an-email-from-you-to-jeanne-marrazzonih.gov/>

Episode 56GF July 19, 2023. The Ask: Request a complaint-based system from 10 Attorney Generals suing the E P A to give wood stove users "certainty". The Ask: Emails of 3 NIH officials [jeanne.marrazzo@nih.gov](mailto:jeanne.marrazzo@nih.gov);

[hugh.auchincloss@nih.gov](mailto:hugh.auchincloss@nih.gov); [Lawrence.tabak@nih.gov](mailto:Lawrence.tabak@nih.gov) Emails of 13 Assistant Attorney Generals, Deputy Attorney

Generals and General Counsel preparing to sue the EPA to provide clarity for indoor residential wood stove manufacturers, vendors, and users. Instead, the assistant attorneys general should ask for a PM2.5 pollution complaint based system in place of the failed wood stove certification program. The states involved are Alaska, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington, as well as the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency. A new icon has been added to the RAWSEPresidents Website, which is now the nearest right icon. The icon is an ask that has already been described in Episode 56G B (description of the parties who should be at the table when

deciding on “safe” wood stove emission limits and fenceline measurements, rather than wood stove certification) and (emails to contact 10 Deputy or Assistant Attorney Generals and one General Counsel) (those PDFs are included at the icon link). Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates, see <https://rawsepresidents.wordpress.com> and click on the nearest right icon for The Ask: 1)Email PDF letters to 3 officials of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and NIAID <https://rawsepresidents.wordpress.com/1-please-attach-pdf-letter-to-niaid-director-dr-jeanne-marrazzo-to-an-email-from-you-to-jeanne-marrazzonih-gov/> The Ask 2)Email PDF letters to 13 Assistant Attorneys Generals, Deputy Attorney Generals and General Counsel <https://rawsepresidents.wordpress.com/1-please-contact-10-attorneys-general-about-august-2023-suit-versus-e-p-a-asking-for-certainty-for-wood-stove-users-rawsep-asks-for-complaint-based-system-based-on-pm2-5-monitor-data-exceeding-e-p/> To the right of that 3)“Barbie Goes To The Dating Game” <https://rawsepresidents.wordpress.com/1-barbie-goes-to-the-dating-game/> To the right of that 4)“Cookies that may contain Rocks are recalled” <https://rawsepresidents.wordpress.com/cookies-that-may-contain-rocks-are-recalled/> to the right of that 5)“The Fox Owns the Forest” card game <https://rawsepresidents.wordpress.com/the-fox-owns-the-forest-card-game-tba/> then to the right of that, the latest months, 6)August & 7)July 2023, of PDFs of articles with U R L's to search on <https://rawsepresidents.wordpress.com/1-august-2023-pdfs-of-urls/> and <https://rawsepresidents.wordpress.com/1-july-2023-pdfs-of-urls/> To the right of that, 8)Stickers to handout for RAWSEP, Games such as 9a)Bingo for RAWSEP, 9b)Crosswords for RAWSEP 9c)PM2.5JeopardyFree game <https://youtu.be/Lnsg32pYDnc> 9d)PM2.5FreeMonopoly <https://youtu.be/cUCK1pscQnQ> & EndWoodSmokeMonopoly 9e)“Vending Machines for PM2.5 monitors”, and 10)icon links to 30 minute Youtube videos and Spotify podcasts as well as podcasts.google.com, Castbox and PocketCast. PocketCast is only Free on the phone App. Pocket Cast works on Apple phones) and, below those icons, icon links to monthly URL's of PDFs from June 2023 to May 2022.





