

Mountain View Coalition

Mountain View Neighborhood Association • Mountain View Community Action •
Friends of Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge



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New Mexico Terminal Services Air Pollution Permit Revoked by City

Mountain View Coalition & NMELC Celebrate One Less Potential Source of Harmful Emissions in Already Overburdened Community

ALBUQUERQUE, NM—The Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board approved a joint motion tonight to dismiss a request for a hearing on the merits for an air quality permit issued in October 2020 for New Mexico Terminal Services (NMTS) for a proposed hot mix asphalt batch plant that would have operated in the Mountain View neighborhood. The vote was unanimous tonight, Wednesday, February 8, 2023.

The action taken tonight by the Air Board ends a multi-year fight by community members in the Mountain View Coalition and attorneys from the New Mexico Environmental Law Center to prevent another polluting industry from setting up shop in a community primarily comprised of low-income people of color that has been designated by the EPA as an “environmental justice” community.

The Mountain View Coalition is made up of three groups that united to appeal the issuance of an air pollution permit to NMTS by the City of Albuquerque’s Environmental Health Department (EHD): Mountain View Neighborhood Association, Mountain View Community Action, and Friends of Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge.

Community members organized for more than four years in an effort to prevent additional air pollution in the neighborhood and to protect community health. In spite of the many challenges of trying to organize during the Covid pandemic, the community increased the pressure on city and county officials to reverse the air pollution permit for New Mexico Terminal Services’

proposed asphalt plant at 9615 Broadway SE, just past the Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge, and north of Isleta Pueblo and I-25 as it heads west.

The Mountain View Coalition garnered more than 1,000 signatures to their petition (<http://bit.ly/stoptheasphaltassault>) addressed to elected officials to reverse the permit that EHD granted in October 2020. Coalition members mailed a postcard to all residents in Mountain View and the neighboring Pueblo of Isleta, and went door-to-door speaking with neighbors and sharing concerns. Friends of Valle de Oro created a StoryMap detailing the dozens of polluting industries already in the historic agricultural community (<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/df926541539f4c2c9d3aba77e58d17aa>). They also published an OpEd in the *Albuquerque Journal* (<https://www.abqjournal.com/2404174/is-citys-industrial-sacrifice-zone.html>), made dozens of phone calls and hand-delivered letters to Mayor Keller, and held discussions with representatives from Isleta Pueblo that created a growing momentum of community members and allies fighting to protect the health and environment of Mountain View.

Mountain View Coalition members and their attorneys celebrated this victory in the battle to address the long history of cumulative impacts, environmental injustice, and environmental racism in their community.

Lauro Silva, President, Mountain View Neighborhood Association, said, “We have been fighting the environmental contamination the City has historically been shoving down into our communities. For more than 24 years we have opposed the City policies of permitting dirty industries with ever increasing air, soil and water pollution in Mountain View. Many residents have suffered respiratory illnesses, blue baby syndrome, and other health impacts, as well as a 10- to 22-year shorter life expectancy as compared to other areas. We have Superfund sites, brownfields, auto wrecking yards, asphalt plants, chemical companies, a sewer plant, and huge fires at metal recycling yards. This decision by EHD to revoke NMTS’ air pollution permit is a victory in our effort to prevent another industry from contaminating our air. We thank ALL who signed our petition and to many of the unsung heroes who continue to fight the environmental racism before us. *Ya BASTA con la contaminación y las pólizas racistas.*”

Nora Garcia, Secretary of the Mountain View Neighborhood Association, said, “We were very excited to learn that EHD decided to revoke NMTS’ permit. This is considered a major victory for the Community of Mountain View. **We are dedicated to working toward a pollution-free environment concerning Land Use Zoning, Air Quality, and Water Quality and where there is environmental Justice for all that live in the Mountain View Community.**”

David Barber, President of Friends of Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge, shared: “I am a longtime resident of the Mountain View community. I’ve lived here since 1994 and ever since the community and neighborhood has always fought dirty industry coming into the area. Our latest battle has been with New Mexico Terminal Services. We are pleased to see EHD revoke the air pollution permit they had issued for NMTS. **We see that as a huge victory for the neighborhood.**”

Marla Painter, President of Mountain View Community Action, said, “After years of the Mountain View community committing our time and resources against the folly that it is

conscionable to build another polluting asphalt plant in our neighborhood on agriculturally zoned land next to families, farms and a wildlife refuge, the EHD has finally realized it is their duty to revoke this permit. We are gratified that the Air Board and EHD have recognized their responsibilities.”

Eric Jantz, Senior Staff Attorney at New Mexico Environmental Law Center, said, “This has been a long and difficult fight for this community. This is an important first step toward a more just and equitable development model. No community should be Bernalillo County’s dumping ground.”

Maslyn Locke, Staff Attorney with New Mexico Environmental Law Center, said, “We are all thrilled to see EHD make the right decision and terminate this permit. The last thing Mountain View needs is another polluting industry, because the community is already overburdened and living with the negative impacts of air pollution. The board's decision tonight is in line with their job to prevent and clean up air pollution and an important step in protecting the health of Bernalillo County residents.”

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