

THIS MONTH IN EAST PHILLIPS & MIDTOWN...

GRASSROOTS EFFORT FORCES EPA CRACKDOWN ON SMITH FOUNDRY POLLUTION



On June 4, the East Phillips community and surrounding neighborhoods won a partial victory for environmental justice.

In May 2023, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conducted a surprise investigation of Smith Foundry, an iron manufacturing facility, and was cited for violating the Clean Air Act nine times. Among the results, the agency found that Smith was emitting twice the amount of air pollution allowed by law, failed to maintain pollution control devices, and did not notify the state of equipment failures.

East Phillips has long been a sacrifice zone: an EPA Superfund site, home to Smith Foundry and Bituminous Roadways, a garbage transfer station, and encircled by two highways. Yet, it is also a hub of fierce resistance.

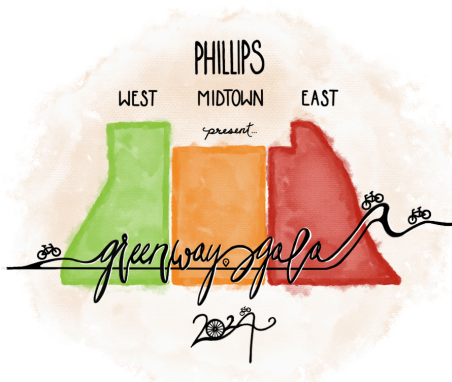
Following the EPA's inspection, East Phillips and its allies have tirelessly campaigned to shut Smith Foundry down. We demanded that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) use their emergency powers to close the facility until it complies with regulations. We collaborated with state representatives on an amortization bill to phase out polluting facilities. We testified at committee hearings, rallied outside Smith Foundry, shared testimonies of health complications, environmental racism, and asthma affecting our children. We met weekly to strategize, reported odors to 311 and the MPCA, and sent numerous emails to the MPCA and Governor Walz, urging them to shut Smith Foundry down. We created petitions, held informational sessions, built a communications campaign, and much more.

All of this organizing led to the EPA reaching a settlement agreement over Smith Foundry's repeated violations. On June 4, the EPA announced that Smith has 12 months to shut down the iron smelting furnaces—the most polluting components of its business - in the hopes that by June of 2025 the Foundry's emissions will be drastically reduced. The EPA made the announcement, but it was East Phillips' pressure that made it happen. And we are not done organizing.

This is a massive step in a victory towards environmental justice, but we are not willing to compromise our health. We will keep organizing to shut Smith down immediately so our children, our elders, and our community can breathe fresh air now.

THANK YOU FOR COMING OUT TO THE GREENWAY GALA

Our first Greenway Gala was a big success! Thank you to vendors, Phillips residents, and others for joining us on the Greenway! We hope to see you next year.



DO YOU HAVE A PROJECT THAT YOU WOULD LIKE SUPPORT ON? REACH OUT TO US!



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