Bernard Smith,
20 Armanino Ct,
Oakland, CA 94618

2016-May-12

Re, Informational Public Hearing on Fuel Oils & Gasoline in Oakland, held May 9, 2016.

Written Testimony to the Special Concurrent Meeting of the Oakland Redevelopment Successor Agency/city Council

Dear Oakland City Counsel Members;

I am a resident of Oakland, a retired physicist and concerned about the harmful effects of coal dust. During my career, I have developed and utilized numerous instruments to monitor breathing air containing hazardous chemicals and small dust particles.

Even though coal is inert and harmless to handle or even to ingest, small coal dust particles suspended in our breathing air are dangerous. Small coal dust particles:

Are hard and sharp edged,
will not dissolve in water,
will not fall to the ground by the force of gravity,
remain suspended in the air for long time periods.

These harmful particles are too small to see individually, but in large quantities, may appear as a haze or a light fog. However, even in small quantities, when there is no apparent evidence of their presence, they cause harm when inhaled. Rain or water spray may clear the air of coal dust particles, but the water soon evaporates and the coal dust is again dispersed by light breezes and wind currents. The laws of physics are ever present.

Without a doubt, transporting and transferring coal between vessels, will release large quantities of coal dust into our atmosphere. Mitigation would be extremely difficult, if not IMPOSSIBLE.

Oakland residents must not be used as test subjects for “innovative” coal-dust containment that violate the laws of physics.

We must reject coal shipments through Oakland.

Respectfully,
Bernard “Tom” Smith