

I am a longtime resident of Reisterstown and am the parent of a daughter with asthma. When my daughter was young she developed asthma. I can think of few things more frightening than watching your child struggle to breathe with no warning. When running around with her friends on a warm summer day, my otherwise healthy and very athletic child would have attacks where she would struggle to breathe. Other children would run in and take giant gulps of air after running around, my daughter would turn colors and literally not be able to breathe until she used her inhaler. I can't describe the terror for parents who experience this. One day, even a trip to the inner harbor to a baseball game was enough to require emergency medical treatment at the ballpark. And my daughter's asthma isn't even considered severe...

Science has proven a direct correlation between pollution and asthma. Children in inner cities and in areas closer to pollutants experience asthma at significantly higher rates than others. Our children are the canaries in our environmental coal mine. Over 10% of children in Maryland suffer from asthma! Each day, 11 Americans die of asthma. Each day, 40,000 people miss work or school due to their asthma. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that 439,900 Marylanders suffer from asthma. ***Asthma accounts for one-quarter of all emergency room visits!*** Imagine the cost in dollars and the emotional toll. Science has conclusively shown that asthma is frequently caused by and triggered by pollution. Coal is a major contributor to the pollutants causing death and illness for countless Marylanders like my daughter. Maryland's six coal plants contribute as much pollution as 2 million cars or 40% of Maryland passenger vehicles. My personal experience is with asthma, but did you know that 20% of all deaths from lung cancer are people who never smoked?

Approximately 85% of Marylanders live in counties that fail to meet EPA healthy air standards for smog. In addition, coal ash pollutes our drinking water and is directly associated with climate change. We ***must*** act to change this. Please lead Maryland to a cleaner future. Please support Maryland Coal Community Transition Act, HB66/SB148. Our children are counting on you.

Sources:

[https://www.cdc.gov/asthma/most\\_recent\\_data\\_states.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/asthma/most_recent_data_states.htm)

<https://www.asthmamd.org/asthma-statistics/>