



August 28, 2007

The Honorable Kathleen Babineaux Blanco
Office of the Governor; State of Louisiana
Attn: Constituent Services
P.O. Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9004

RE: DuPont Pontchartrain Chemical Facility

Dear Ms. Blanco:

We are writing to you today to discuss our serious concerns regarding the potential health and safety hazards and environmental impact that could be unleashed on the state of Louisiana in the near future. At the center of our concern is the chemical giant DuPont and its subsidiary DuPont Performance Elastomers (DPE).

As you may know, DuPont intends to close its Neoprene Rubber facility in Louisville, KY and consolidate the production in LaPlace, LA. This will put over 200 workers out of a job. The USW represents over 1,800 DuPont workers including those in Louisville at both DPE and the neighboring DuPont Works.

At first glance, DuPont's plan may appear to be beneficial for your state and its workers—DuPont is keeping these production jobs in Louisiana. But media reports claim only “a few new jobs” will be added.

The trade-off for these jobs will be added pollution and higher risk for cancer-causing emissions that the citizens of Louisiana, not DuPont will pay for. Is this a fair trade-off for the health of your state's citizens?

1. A June 27, 2007 article in the Louisville Courier-Journal reports that DPE's estimated cancer risks from the maximum emissions allowed under its permits could cause 357,000 cases for every million people. Area industrial plants submitted their worst-case scenarios for potential health risks to their neighbors as part of a new program in Louisville to curb toxic air emissions known as the Strategic Toxic Air Reduction program. The estimate is based on maximum allowable emissions of chloroprene from the DuPont Performance Elastomers facility. (article enclosed)
2. DPE is the only company in North America to make Neoprene. After the proposed plant consolidation, resulting nation-wide chloroprene emissions will be concentrated in LaPlace. The most recent available 2005 EPA Toxic Release Inventory data reported Point Source Air Emissions for both facilities:

Louisville:	366,207 pounds
LaPlace:	297,000 pounds

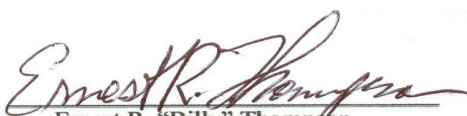
United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International
Union

5 Gateway Center Pittsburgh, PA 15202 - 412.562.6968 (office)


3. DPE has not released its expected production levels for Neoprene, once the consolidation is completed, nor has it given estimates for chloroprene emissions.
4. According to the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet on this chemical (enclosed):
 - * Chloroprene can affect you when breathed in and by passing through your skin.
 - * Chloroprene should be handled as a CARCINOGEN-- WITH EXTREME CAUTION.
 - * Chloroprene can cause reproductive damage. Handle with extreme caution.
 - * Contact can irritate and burn the eyes and skin with possible eye damage.
 - * Exposure to high concentrations can cause dizziness, lightheadedness and passing out.
 - * Chloroprene can cause temporary loss of hair on exposed body parts.
 - * High or repeated exposure may damage the liver, kidneys and lungs.
 - * Chloroprene is a FLAMMABLE LIQUID and a FIRE HAZARD.
5. DPE and its predecessor company DuPont Dow Elastomers (DDE) agreed in January 2005 to plead guilty to charges of participating in a price-fixing conspiracy for Polychloroprene Rubber. DDE agreed to pay a fine of \$84 million to the U.S. Department of Justice, as well as paying some additional settlements to purchasers, and faces further liability in additional lawsuits. DPE recently agreed to pay a \$4 million fine to Canada over this same price-fixing scandal.
6. DuPont claims that worker safety is a "core value," however a contract worker employed at its Sabine River Works facility in Orange, Texas lost his life on July 24, 2007 when he was crushed by pipes which shifted while being moved in the Ethylene Unit of the plant. (article enclosed)
7. Congressmen John Yarmuth (KY) and Steven LaTourette (OH) co-signed a letter to DPE President and CEO Francine Shaw on August 15, 2007 expressing concern that rubber manufacturing companies in their districts will suffer from supply shortages and rising prices that "will negatively impact productivity and jeopardize the long-term viability of their business." (letter enclosed)

In addition, to its reputation as a corporate polluter, our union believes that DuPont is the most anti-union, anti-worker company we represent. If this consolidation project is allowed to continue we can not stress enough that Louisiana must keep a watchful eye on DuPont and closely monitor the emissions of these dangerous chemicals.

Sincerely,



Ernest R. "Billy" Thompson
Director USW District 8
Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia Maryland



J. M. "Mickey" Breaux
Director USW District 13
Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma