

Governor Carney: EPA can't let other states pollute Delaware's air

Op-ed by Governor John Carney

Watching a Blue Rocks game. Sitting by the pool. Walking along the Rehoboth boardwalk.

For most of us, that's what summertime means. It's a time of fun and relaxation.

But for the majority of Delawareans with asthma or other breathing problems, **summer can be a nightmare.**

That's because Delaware's air quality ranks among the worst in the country. **The real kicker, though, is that 90 percent of that pollution comes from other states.**



Delaware has made great strides over the past 30 years in reducing our own

emissions.

We've enacted stricter controls on power plants, refineries, and manufacturing sites.

From 2000-2017, Delaware's coal-fired electric generation has been reduced by approximately 90 percent. We've reduced coal-fired power generation to one well-controlled unit in the entire state.

To comply with federal and state air regulations, Delaware electric generators and operators such as Calpine and NRG have spent millions of dollars to control emissions that cause ozone pollution.

But, without help from the Environmental Protection Agency in Washington, we can't move the needle on our air quality. So, we asked the EPA to intervene in the states that are "upwind" from Delaware – where all our air pollution is coming from.

Most of the power plants in these states have pollution control technology. But sometimes, the plants don't turn the technology on.

Delaware asked the EPA to require these power plants to run their pollution control equipment any time the plants are in operation, and especially during the summer months, when ozone levels are the highest.

EPA has the authority to do this under the Clean Air Act. We're asking them to

use it.



Unfortunately, though, the EPA recently proposed to deny our request. So, for the time being, Delawareans will continue to suffer as we enter this hot summer season.

Working with Attorney General Matt Denn, we're looking at ways to force the EPA to enforce the Clean Air Act, and protect Delaware's air quality.

We can have a debate about the role of government, or climate change, or the decisions coming out of Washington. But there's no disputing that power plant emissions cause air pollution, air pollution makes it harder to breathe, and Delaware's air pollution is coming almost entirely from other states.

Delaware's companies have spent the money and cleaned up their emissions. Other states have not.

If we do nothing else as a government, it seems to me that ensuring our citizens have clean air to breathe should be the minimum standard.

Delaware will continue to employ state-of-the-art emission control technology for our industrial sites. We will continue doing what we can to keep our citizens safe. **But we need the federal government to step up and do its job, as well, so all Delawareans can breathe easy.**

Related

[Delaware to Sue U.S. EPA for Failure to Curb Out-of-State Air Pollution](#)

[Governor Carney, Congressional Delegation Oppose Trump Administration on Clean Air Ruling](#)