

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

October 25, 2018

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler  
Acting Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.  
Washington D.C. 20004

Dear Acting Administrator Andrew Wheeler:

We write to request the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) perform an in-depth investigation of ethylene oxide (EtO) emissions at two facilities in Lake County, Illinois—Medline Industries, Inc. in Waukegan and Vantage Specialty Chemicals, Inc. in Gurnee.

The National Air Toxics Assessment (NATA) is a critical public health tool that EPA and other agencies use to identify sources of pollution and potential risks to public health. Since the release of the 2014 NATA, EPA has worked to address public concern about increased cancer risks in DuPage County due to EtO emissions from the Sterigenics facility in Willowbrook. The same assessment identified EtO emissions from the Medline and Vantage facilities as possibly leading to increased cancer risk in the Lake County area. Given this discovery, we request the EPA work with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to:

- Conduct ambient air monitoring and stack tests to identify any emissions from the Medline and Vantage facilities and determine whether these facilities are in compliance with existing Clean Air Act (CAA) regulations.
- Guarantee both companies are taking the necessary steps to limit EtO emissions using any available pollution control technologies, as the Sterigenics facility did;
- Make all test data publicly available and hold a public meeting to assure residents that steps are being taken to mitigate the EtO exposure in Lake County; and
- Publish the threshold public health standard EPA will use to determine if the fugitive EtO emissions from Vantage Specialty Chemicals, Inc. or Medline Industries, Inc. exceed levels that science deems safe.

In addition, we urge EPA to publish a timeline for when it will revise the current CAA EtO standards to limit future emission are limited to a level deemed safe by the 2016 Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry and 2014 NATA reports. These recent reports have shown that the existing standards need to be lowered to protect public health in communities across the county.

Thank you for considering our requests, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely

  
RICHARD J. DURBIN  
United States Senator

  
TAMMY DUCKWORTH  
United States Senator

  
BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER  
United States Representative