

# Toxic Coal Dust Pollution in Stockton

Toxic coal dust released during the storage and handling of coal may be polluting Stockton neighborhoods. Stockton residents already suffer from high levels of asthma and other health issues due to bad air quality.



Open-air coal and/or petcoke piles at the Port of Stockton

## Coal shipments in Stockton

- Last year, over 1.7 million metric tons of coal, one of the dirtiest fossil fuels, was shipped out of Stockton. That's a 5,309% increase in coal shipments from just 2012!<sup>i</sup>
- In Stockton, boats are partially loaded with coal, then shipped through the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta down to Richmond, where they are topped off with more coal prior to shipment overseas.

## How coal dust may pollute neighborhoods

- During their journey from the mines to the terminal, open-top coal cars release coal dust into the air. **This may result in toxic pollutants being released into the backyards of Stockton residents.**
- Once the coal reaches the terminal, it is stored **less than 1,000 meters (or 0.6 miles) from the closest residence**<sup>ii</sup>—uncovered—before shipment.

## Why is this a problem for community health?

Coal dust includes toxic metals like arsenic, lead, and mercury. Prolonged, direct exposure to it is linked to devastating health consequences, including **chronic bronchitis, decreased lung function, cancer, and death.**<sup>iii</sup>

<sup>i</sup> USA Trade Online. HS Port-Level Data, Exports. See <https://tinyurl.com/yyaprw6c>

<sup>ii</sup> Google Maps. See <https://tinyurl.com/y6f67kgb>

<sup>iii</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 1995. Criteria for a Recommended Standard: Occupational Exposure to Respirable Coal Mine Dust. See <https://tinyurl.com/y4dgpz bq>