



The Martin Lake coal plant. Photo by Al Braden

THE MARTIN LAKE POWER PLANT | *Tatum, Texas*

THE POLLUTER: Tatum, Texas, is a small East Texas town with about 1,300 residents. It has a Dairy Queen and a beautiful football stadium and modest streets beset with pines and oaks. It's also home to Luminant's giant Martin Lake coal plant, one of the deadliest coal plants in the country. Martin Lake releases massive amounts of pollution every year, impacting Tatum, nearby small towns and cities like Longview, and the Dallas Fort Worth Metroplex, where many neighborhoods – particularly communities of color – are overburdened by dirty industries like concrete and asphalt plants. Martin Lake has outdated and improperly-sized pollution controls that fail to meet modern standards despite how sick it is making people – and it even kills people as far away as Houston and across state lines. But several EPA rules could be strengthened to require the company to install pollution controls, which would improve air quality for Texans and neighboring states. Strong rules would also require other industries to decrease their pollution, multiplying the benefits for marginalized communities surrounded by unhealthy air.

THE PEOPLE: “I’ve lived in this area my whole life, and a lot has been lost due to the coal plant. I use a personal air monitor every day to figure out if I should spend much time outdoors. I miss going to the lake, and I miss sitting outside every evening. I also miss being surrounded by the sound of crickets and cicadas in the summertime, but now the insects are gone. The air quality is also affecting our kids, elderly residents, and residents with health conditions. It just isn’t right, and EPA needs to do better. It’s too late for me and my generation, but we need to improve the air for our younger generations.”

—Paulette Goree, a Tatum resident. Paulette says that Martin Lake’s constant pollution gave her husband breathing problems, and her father and sister died of COPD.