

Community Members for Environmental Justice

cmejnorthside@gmail.com

To Mayor Jacob Frey, Minneapolis City Council, MPCA and Other Elected Officials,

We are writing to you as a coalition of caring community members, mothers, and youth who are committed to addressing the environmental and climate injustices occurring disproportionately in pollution-burdened neighborhoods in the City of Minneapolis. Community Members for Environmental Justice (CMEJ) consists of Northsiders and Northeasters alike, in addition to allies from around the Metro area. When we look at the City's definition of "environmental justice," the right to a clean, safe, and healthy quality of life for people of all races, incomes, and cultures," ([Minneapolis 2040](#)), this is exactly what we've been advocating for and demanding for decades. Yet, we find ourselves here once again.

The City of Minneapolis has made some strides in identifying deep-rooted systemic inequities through declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis and designating two Green Zones. While we are grateful for leadership in making these much needed efforts, without concentrated time and political will, we will face preventable disasters, particularly in our North and Northeast neighborhoods.

Being mindful that we are on Dakota land with hundreds of years of historical trauma built up for all of our Native and American Descendants of Slavery relatives, we demand that our City officials along with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) work together to shut down and remove Northern Metals from the City of Minneapolis and away from the sacred Mississippi River.

As organizations, businesses, and institutions who highly value the dignity of human life and the natural world, we stand with CMEJ and their deep commitment to centering community health and vitality by removing harmful polluters in our neighborhoods. European Management Recycling (EMR) is one of those polluters based in England and the owner of Northern Metals.

European Management Recycling (EMR) is destroying our Minneapolis community. Here are our concerns:

- Northern Metals, located on the banks of the Mississippi River and near residential areas where families live, caught on fire on April 21, 2021.
- People are dying in Minneapolis neighborhoods along the Mississippi River from fires at EMR sites and continuous industrial pollution. Along with the East Phillips community, our families are living and dying with the highest rates of cancer, diabetes, asthma, and other respiratory diseases in the state.
- From multiple fires at sites in England to those in Baton Rouge, Minneapolis, Becker and Camden, New Jersey, EMR is a repeat offender and will continue to be at seventy sites across the United States unless we produce consequences and shut them down.
- The 2020 fire in Becker, Minnesota, lasted for 5 days. Plumes of smoke were so high that they were visible from space. And in January of 2021, people were hospitalized and EMR was fined \$97,000 after the fire at the plant in Camden, New Jersey.

As place-based organizations and business in support of the leadership of CMEJ, we are asking for the following: (*see page 2*)

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1) Attorney General and Hennepin County Attorney: File **criminal¹ charges** against Northern Metals immediately.

2) City Agencies and Elected Officials: The City attorney files an action in court to apply the **nuisance law** to Northern Metals and also begins the **eviction process** (can landlords break leases with nuisance code violators like in housing, when a problem property is raided the landlord has to evict the tenant, especially if felonies have been committed?).

3) City Fire Department: Stop all Northern Metal operations - Fire plan and protocol/accountability for fire hazards on site must be made public - as a repeat offender (post Becker fire, Camden, NJ fire, and prior to the Northern Metal fires) - and information about the site's location must be publicized (near a gas station and residential areas).

4) Minneapolis and State Health Departments: Fine these entities, do a cumulative health effects analysis, and most importantly, shut down Northern Metals. These fires are environmental health hazards concentrated in the Northside Green Zone. As of yet, neither health department has taken a stance on the negative health impacts Northern Metals continues to rain down on our community.

5) All City Council and Mayoral Candidates [for Nov 2021 election]: Sign a **declaration** of support to hold Northern Metals accountable, in addition to other pollution sources that are creating environmental health problems for families.

Northside and Northeast place-based organizations, nonprofits, neighborhood associations, businesses and all of our allies need our elected officials to make the removal of Northern Metals a priority before any more damage is done to our community. The City has no problem addressing smaller nuisance properties but refuses to take a stand against Northern Metals. As residents and organizations that serve these communities, we deserve better. Our sacred Mississippi deserves better. We want to see a coordinated plan that stretches across political roles to address this long standing problem. Community members have been leading this fight for more than a decade and it's way past time that those of you whom we have elected to represent us do your job: step up and make the changes we've proposed that will keep our communities safe.

With respect for the earth and the work,

[list of names here]

TO ADD YOUR SIGNATURE EMAIL danielle.tietjen@gmail.com TODAY!

¹ [Minn. Stat § 609.671](#), subd. 9 states: ".**False statements; tampering.** (a) A person is guilty of a felony who knowingly:

(1) makes any false material statement, representation, or certification in; omits material information from; or alters, conceals, or fails to file or maintain a notice, application, record, report, plan, manifest, permit, license, or other document required under sections [103F.701](#) to [103F.755](#); chapter 115 or 116; the hazardous waste transportation requirements of chapter 221; or rules adopted under these laws; or

(2) falsifies, tampers with, renders inaccurate, or fails to install any monitoring device or method required to be maintained or followed for the purpose of compliance with sections [103F.701](#) to [103F.755](#), chapter 115 or 116, or rules adopted under these laws.