

Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League

www.BREDL.org PO Box 88 Glendale Springs, North Carolina 28629 BREDL@skybest.com (336) 982-2691

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CONTACT:
Louis Zeller (336) 982-2691

Today the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League issued a report on the potential for high air pollution levels if a proposed asphalt plant is approved in Glendale Springs. Entitled Technical Report 15-274: Air Pollution Model, the report concludes that the draft permit would not meet state standards for air pollution including benzene, formaldehyde and dioxin.

Louis Zeller, author of the report, said, "Our conclusion is not surprising if one considers that in addition to the smokestack emissions a huge amount of ground-level air pollution would be emitted annually from the proposed Appalachian Materials asphalt plant." The report details how far from the proposed asphalt plant site on Glendale School Road excess pollution levels would travel. Zeller continued, "Our study points to a severe risk to public health over a six-mile radius around the proposed asphalt plant site, extending to Highways 163 and 88."

Zeller said that the draft permit by the Division of Air Quality is fatally flawed. With this in mind, the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League developed this report, employing tools which present a more accurate assessment of the pollution risks facing residents.

The report concludes that the North Carolina Division of Air Quality's draft permit would not meet state standards for toxic air pollution and recommends that Ashe County take steps to ensure that its Polluting Industries Ordinance be strengthened in order to continue protecting the health and safety of its people.

The statewide Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League has a local chapter in Glendale Springs, Protect Our Fresh Air, who provided photos to illustrate weather conditions in the mountain village on the banks of the New River.

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