

My name is Suzie Canales, Director of Citizens for Environmental Justice, based in Corpus Christi, Texas. The report released today reveals that Corpus Christi is on the worst-refinery list twice in the top 10 in the nation for emitting carcinogens. But, ironically, industry, tceq and some entities with the local university commonly state to the public that our air is clean.

That statement is based on being in-attainment, barely. And that statement was a major factor in the city getting the "All American City" award in 2003.

But attainment vs. non-attainment is based on only 6 criteria air pollutants. So that statement is mis-leading, a misconception - and does a HUGE disservice to the low-income communities off color that are being blasted daily with some of the highest levels of carcinogens.

At the core of the problem is that the facilities are on the "honor system." They self report their emissions. And in Corpus Christi, this is part of the issue which has led to Citgo refinery (east plant) currently facing federal criminal indictments for under-reporting benzene emissions, a carcinogen - the honor system does not work.

Our air is NOT clean and the people deserve to know the truth. We will use this report released today by EIP as a tool to fight for environmental justice.

Facilities that are bigger, like Koch refinery, don't have justification for releasing more carcinogens. They have a bigger responsibility to address these issues and fence-line monitoring conducted by a reputable party, that can be agreed on by all is essential. In addition, the data should be made available online for all to access.