

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 19, 2020

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For region's industries, Earth Day a reminder Of Pittsburgh's environmental progress

PITTSBURGH – A robust economy and a clean and healthy environment go together, the labor-business alliance Pittsburgh Works Together (pghworks.com) said in a statement to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day.

“The need for both a healthy environment and for our locally produced metals and plastics sectors comes into dramatic focus with the current COVID-19 crisis,” said noted civic leader Morgan O’Brien, co-chair of Pittsburgh Works. “Ventilators, which are saving thousands of lives, are constructed primarily from metal and plastic. We need more capacity to create critical materials here locally where we know that no one builds a better product and is more environmentally responsible.”

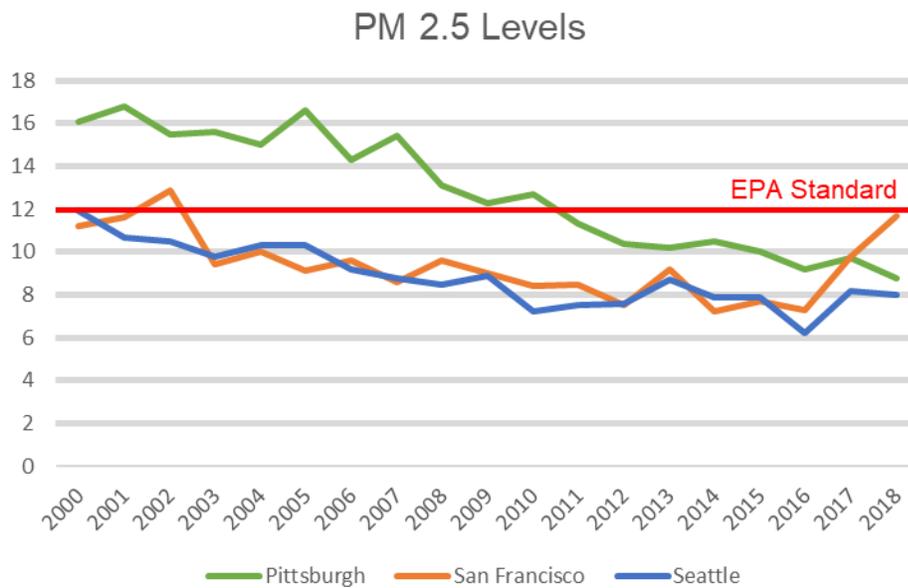
“As the economy recovers, it is critical that manufacturing and supply chains move from overseas to the United States to help protect against future disruptions, and we know western Pennsylvania can lead the way with both a highly skilled workforce and environmental responsibility like nowhere else in the world,” O’Brien said.

“We are producing metals in ways that are cleaner than ever, and increased use of natural gas is reducing the impacts on our atmosphere. Our construction trade unions and contractors are proud of both the jobs they create, and their contributions to the progress we have made to make our air and water cleaner,” said labor leader Tom Melcher, co-chair of Pittsburgh Works. “Innovation and investment are critical to continuous improvement of the environment, which is the basic premise of Earth Day.”

They noted:

- The air and water in the Pittsburgh region are cleaner than it has been in generations, even as the economy expanded and the natural gas industry flourished.
- Natural gas and other fossil fuels are vital in the fight against COVID-19 but play other roles in our daily lives. From appliances to smart phones to pharmaceuticals, natural gas is a key component in progress.

- The energy, manufacturing and construction industries will be critical in our region’s economic recover post-COVID, including new career opportunities for those whose jobs might have vanished forever.
- Levels of the pollutant PM_{2.5} in the Pittsburgh region have dropped by nearly 50% over the past 20 years.



EPA particulate matter regional trends (PM_{2.5} weighted annual mean, micrograms per cubic meter)
 Source: *Air Quality Statistics By City, 2018*
<https://www.epa.gov/air-trends/air-quality-cities-and-counties>

Region	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Pittsburgh	10.5	10	9.2	9.7	8.8
San Francisco	7.2	7.7	7.3	9.8	11.7
Seattle	7.9	7.9	6.2	8.2	8

NOTE: Pittsburgh Works Together Executive Director Jeff Nobers can be reached at (412) 977-1263 for interviews in conjunction with April 19 Earth Day events.

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