

February 1, 2011

To the Board of Supervisors of Santa Clara County:

The Honorable Dave Cortese, District 3  
The Honorable Mike Wasserman, District 1  
The Honorable George Shirakawa, District 2  
The Honorable Ken Yeager, District 4  
The Honorable Liz Kniss, District 5

The Santa Clara County Medical Association (SCCMA) recognizes the potential negative impact on public health due to cement plant operations which contribute to global warming and emit a variety of toxic pollutants into the air with direct exposure to the population and the environment of our County. We also recognize that the Lehigh cement plant is the fourth largest emitter of mercury, a potent neurotoxin, from cement plants in the United States. The SCCMA asks that all current violations of the Cupertino site of the Lehigh Southwest Cement Company, including mining operations, be corrected and that as long as the plant operates, new EPA standards for mercury, hydrochloric acid, total particulate matter, and total hydrocarbons be implemented and directly monitored where emitted into the air via a single stack. We also ask that any future violations noted be promptly corrected as a condition of all permits granted.

We ask for full enforcement of the laws and regulations to protect public and environmental health in this region. We are opposed to expansion of any polluting activity in a densely populated area that poses a risk to public health. We support smart and sustainable development with minimal impact on residents or the environment.

In line with the policy of the California Medical Association, if operation and development is allowed, then the plant should conform to pollution limits in line with new EPA rules for cement plants. Any existing cement plant should conform to new EPA limits for mercury at 43 lb/million tons of clinker for existing sources. For any expansion of existing cement plants or new development of cement plants, the plant should use best management practices and conform to the new EPA limit of 14 lb/million tons of clinker. Strict monitoring and enforcement will be necessary for the safety of the surrounding residents.

Societal costs of pollution are immense on an individual and global perspective. It is our goal to support and promote the health and well being of our entire population in Santa Clara County, which not only improves lives but is also cost effective for all of us in the long run.

Respectfully submitted,



Cindy Lee Russell, M.D.  
Chair, Environmental Health Committee  
Santa Clara County Medical Association



Bill Parrish, CEO  
Santa Clara County Medical Association