



Why is the Soto concrete plant a problem?

Concrete batch plants emit particulate pollution

Concrete batch plants produce a lot of dust. This dust can be a nuisance that prevents you from enjoying your property and could pose a very real health risk.

Dust from concrete batch sites is called **particulate matter**. The smallest and most difficult to detect dust, known as **fine particulate matter, or PM2.5**, poses the most problematic risks to public health as it is able to penetrate deep into the lungs and may enter your bloodstream.

According to the Soto Ready Mix's own permit application, the plant is estimated to emit as much as **8.7 tons of particulate matter per year**. This total includes nearly **half a ton** of fine particulate matter pollution.

What are the health risks?

- Studies have found a close link between exposure to fine particles and premature death from heart and lung disease, including lung cancer.
- Fine particles are also known to trigger or worsen chronic diseases such as asthma, heart attack, bronchitis, and other respiratory problems.
- Exposure to cement dust may also cause immediate or delayed irritation or inflammation of the eyes, as well as allergic reactions.
- An association between mothers' exposure to fine particles and birth defects has been established by several reports.

Who is most at risk?

Children, older adults, pregnant women, and those suffering from lung and/or heart disease are especially vulnerable to fine particles in the air and should take special precautions.

Community with already high rates of cardiac arrest and asthma rates

An analysis of City of Houston 911 data indicates that the Acres Homes community has double the rate of cardiac arrest and six times the rate of ambulance treated asthma attacks than the rest of the city. Upon the city's request, an air modelling expert estimated the level of particulate matter that would be created by the plant; the results indicate that the total fine particulate matter in the neighborhood would exceed the EPA's annual national air quality standards for particulate matter, putting this area in violation of the Clean Air Act.

Site audits indicate frequent permit violations by concrete batch plants

Site audits of similar facilities conducted by the City of Houston's Bureau of Pollution Control in 2016 discovered a number of permit violations that undermined the State's pollution control standards. Of the 39 plants audited, 44 individual violations were observed.

No accountability for off-site pollution

According to the current permit, the Soto Plant will only be required to visually monitor for emissions for 30-minutes once every three months. This does not represent an appropriate level of accountability to operate an industrial facility in a residential environment, and directly adjacent to homes, as there would be no objective record of pollution from the facility.

Safety hazard and noisy nuisance

Currently, the Soto Plant would be permitted to operate 24/7. In addition to particulate matter pollution, these plants can create a safety hazard from increased truck traffic on residential streets and become a noisy nuisance. While we encourage you to bring up any issue that you are concerned about, **please keep in mind that the TCEQ will be concerned with air pollution impacts to health and property.** We recommend that you focus your arguments on the possible impacts to your health and quality of life.