



We've Scored Huge Victories

But the Fight to Defeat Formosa Plastic in "Cancer Alley" Isn't Over



This Is A Fight For Our Lives, and We Need Our Allies To Stay Engaged

In 2018, Gov. John Bel Edwards (D) [announced](#) that Formosa Plastics Group had decided to build a massive petrochemical complex in Louisiana's "cancer alley" and would receive a hefty economic incentive package from the state.

The complex would manufacture chemicals used to [produce](#) plastics that go into making everything from plastics bottles and grocery bags to clothing and artificial turf.

RACIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Rise St. James and Other Environmental Groups Immediately Mobilized to Defeat This Dirty And Dangerous Project

- The project would border Welcome, Louisiana, a community of color in "cancer alley" that is already overburdened by air pollution and faces an elevated risk of cancer.
- The [population](#) is 99% minority, with 87% identifying as Black, many of whom are descendants of people who were enslaved at plantations that existed in the area.
- The petrochemical complex would spread out across a 2,400-acre site encompassing the former Buea Plantation and an unmarked plantation cemetery.
- Sharon Lavigne – the founder of Rise St. James – launched the campaign to defeat the project [upon learning](#) that it would be less than 2 miles from her home.



"For the sake of environmental and racial justice, we must keep up the pressure to ensure Formosa Plastics is officially defeated and the residents of what's now called "cancer alley" get the cleaner, healthier, and safer future we deserve."

- Ms. Sharon Lavigne, RISE St. James Founder

Rise St. James and its Allies Have Won Two Major Legal Battles To Defeat The Project

In September, a Louisiana court ruled in favor of RISE St. James and other plaintiffs and revoked the project's air permits issued by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ).

SIGNIFICANCE

The plant can't be built without state air permits.

In 2020, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers suspended the Clean Water Act permit that would have allowed the project to be built on wetlands, in response to a lawsuit brought forth by RISE St. James and others.

SIGNIFICANCE

The plant can't be built without this federal water permit.

An Award-Winning Organization Working Towards a Future Where There Are No More Cancer Alleys

Please Join Us!

RISE imagines an eco-rebuild in St. James and every river parish that centers public health, justice and equity.

2018

Sharon Lavigne, a retired special education teacher of 38 years, founded RISE St. James to advance environmental justice and end the proliferation of dirty industries in cancer alley.

2018 - 2019

RISE worked with the community to successfully defeat plans for the Chinese company Wanhua to build a \$1.25 billion plastics manufacturing plant. RISE has already achieved a victory in Louisiana district court over the air permits and it aims to stop Formosa Plastics from ever building its planned petrochemical complex.

2021

Sharon Lavigne was awarded the 2021 Goldman Environmental Prize.



The Fight Isn't Over...

LDEQ and Formosa Plastics have appealed the Louisiana district court's decision that revokes the air permits.

After preparing an Environmental Impact Statement – a process that invited public involvement and will take years to complete – the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers could decide to reinstate the Clean Water Act permit.



For The Residents of "Cancer Alley" This is a Fight For Our Lives

- Cancer Alley is an 85-mile industrial corridor with 150 facilities including oil refineries, plastic plants, and chemical facilities stretching between Baton Rouge and New Orleans.
- 7 of the nation's 10 census tracts with the highest risks of cancer are located in Cancer Alley.
- If the appellate court reinstates LDEQ's decision, Formosa Plastics would be authorized to emit over 800 tons per year of toxic chemicals, including nearly 45 tons of two pollutants that are known carcinogens, from its site that is the size of 1,818 football fields.
- If the appellate court reinstates LDEQ's decision, Formosa Plastics would also be authorized to emit 13.6 million tons of greenhouse gases every year, equivalent to 3.5 coal-fired power plants.
- Cancer Alley is already on the frontlines of the climate crisis, regularly experiencing hurricanes, heavy rain, flooding, and extreme heat.

The United Nations and the U.S. EPA Have Called for an End to Dirty Development in "Cancer Alley"

UN human rights experts have called the industrialization of cancer alley a form of environmental racism that must stop.

In an October 2022 letter, EPA called on Louisiana to examine cumulative effects of pollution on people who live near existing and proposed plants in cancer alley, including near the proposed Formosa Plastics complex. The letter presents "significant evidence suggesting that [LDEQ's] actions or inactions have resulted and continue to result in disparate adverse impacts on Black residents of St. John the Baptist Parish, St. James Parish, and the Industrial Corridor."

GET INVOLVED
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