

City Room

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Pilsen Factory Reaches Pollution Settlement

Lisa Miller

CHICAGO (2006-04-07) A smelting factory in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood must spend a half-million dollars to clean up emissions.

Yesterday, H. Kramer and Company and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency reached a settlement.

Karen Sheets says people in the neighborhood have been worried about the air coming from the smelting plant for 20 years.

This past year, about 10 residents came together, took soil samples and passed them on to the Illinois EPA. The agency concluded there were high amounts of lead in the area and took action.

And now, Sheets says, the residents' work has paid off.

"It was really hard, and we were lucky, and I think it's because of the way the times are now and people take environmental concerns more seriously."

Sheets says she's optimistic the company's changes will make a difference in the air she and her neighbors are breathing.

She says there are several other environmental problems in Pilsen the group will tackle next.

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