The Minneapolis Public Works East Phillips Campus Project is located in a City neighborhood with a disproportionately vulnerable population that is already disproportionately impacted by air pollution, especially from mobile source (cars, trucks, etc.).  East Phillips is home to the highest density urban population of Native Americans in the country, as well as to many other people of color from several racial and ethnic backgrounds.  The neighborhood has a high level of poverty, lack of health care, food insecurity, and other factors that result in lower than average health status.

Air pollution monitoring and modeling studies have shown that the neighborhood is impacted by higher levels of toxic air pollution than most other places in Minnesota.  Diesel emissions are the biggest concern.  A large part of the air pollution problem is fact that the neighborhood is bounded by some of the highest volume highways in the state and several high volume roadways transect the neighborhood.

The Minneapolis Public Works East Phillips Campus Project will add to the air pollution burden in the community.  There will be additional workers commuting to the facility, but more problematic are two sources:  diesel vehicles using the facility as a base of operations, and training of diesel equipment operators that is proposed at the site.

To date, the City has not provided information on the levels or locations of activities, neither commuters nor heavy equipment operations, that would allow a quantitative assessment of the emissions or their impacts.  In addition, my understanding is that the City is not proposing a quantitative analysis of the potential risks from the increased activity at the site, and that they maintain they are not required to do so under current law.

Gregory C. Pratt, Ph.D.

612.636.5914 (mobile)

pratt016@umn.edu