

Environmental

Advocates

NY

EANY SUPPORTS Low Cost Air Pollution Reduction



Memo #13

[A.6177-A \(Septimo\)](#)

[S.841-A \(Biaggi, et al.\)](#)

Explanation:

This bill will reduce air pollution by requiring all above ground petroleum storage tanks to be white or beige/cream colored.

Petroleum storage tanks are meant to safely store oil, but even before being used as fuel, oil can emit harmful gases that impact public health and contribute to air pollution. Oil in storage tanks produce gases such as benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylene and other harmful chemicals known as [volatile organic compounds](#). These gases cause [health impacts](#) such as respiratory irritation, heart problems, hearing problems, damages to the liver and kidneys, eye irritation, neurological disorders, and cancer. These volatile organic compounds mix with other chemicals in the air and [produce smog](#), which causes heart and lung diseases such as asthma.

The primary way that petroleum storage tanks produce air pollution is due to evaporation. As the petroleum tank warms from the sun and absorbs heat, the liquid evaporates producing [emissions](#). If the tank is a darker color, it will absorb more sunlight and heat, producing higher emissions. Painting a storage tank a lighter or reflective color like silver, white or cream can reduce evaporation by [up to 40%](#) when compared to a darker colored storage tank. This simple change will help reduce emissions from petroleum bulk storage facilities, thereby reducing air pollution and preventing health impacts from dangerous gases.

While this bill will not have an impact on the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions in the state, it will still help New York achieve the goals established by the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA). The CLCPA not only mandates an 85% reduction in greenhouse gases emissions by 2050, but also requires the State to maximize the reduction of co-pollutants, such as the ones listed above, specifically in disadvantaged communities.

Summary:

This bill amends the Environmental Conservation Law to add a new section 17-1016 that would require all above ground petroleum bulk storage facilities to be painted white or beige / cream. This bill will prohibit facilities and individuals from owning or operating a petroleum storage tank unless it is white or beige/cream, which will reduce emissions of harmful air pollutants.