



**Cincinnati: 45202**

**Do you want to raise your children here?**



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### **Background**

Thursday, December 21, 2000

U.S. Announces Clean Air Settlement with Cinergy – Actions are part of national initiative to stop illegal pollution from coal-fired power plants. Washington, D.C. –

In an ongoing initiative to stop air pollution released illegally from coal-fired power plants, the Justice Department and the EPA today announced a settlement of a lawsuit with Cinergy Corporation, an electric utility based in Cincinnati. The enforcement action, valued at \$1.4 billion, is the largest ever taken by the U.S. EPA under the Clean Air Act...

Coal-fired power plants collectively produce more pollution than any other industry in the United States. Nearly four years ago, EPA began an investigation of coal-fired power plants, including those owned by Cinergy. The federal government in November 1999 filed suit against several electric utilities-including Cinergy-charging that they violated the law by making major modifications to their power plants without installing equipment required to control smog, acid rain and soot. Since that time, a number of states and environmental groups have joined in EPA's efforts.

[www.usdoj.gov/enrd/cinergy.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/enrd/cinergy.htm)

### **Scenario**

Your friends just bought their first house in an older neighborhood of Cincinnati, near the city center. Since moving in, they've observed two disconcerting events - First, every Thursday morning while having coffee on their porch before work they notice a strange, unpleasant odor in the air. Second, their five-year-old son, who has always suffered from mild seasonal allergies, has started to develop more serious, asthma-like symptoms. What should they do? Are there scientific, political or legal pathways they can pursue to investigate these events?

### **Learning Outcomes**

1. Learn about the history and science of environmental pollution in the Ohio River Valley. What does the EPA do? How do they investigate and report environmental conditions?
2. Discuss the relationship between political activism and environmental policy. What is Greenpeace? How did it start?
3. What legal recourse do individuals have when exposed to environmental hazards?