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Kids in West Eugene Most Prone to Asthma

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by [Stacey Kafka](#)

Published July 11, 2013



EUGENE, Ore. — A new study shows kids in West Eugene are breathing in toxins that are causing their lungs to not develop correctly, leading to asthma.

For nine year old Stefani Medsker asthma has almost always been something she has to deal with. “It makes me feel sick, like my stomach starts hurting and it’s hard to breathe,” said Medsker.

A local non-profit, [Beyond Toxics](#), finds little ones living in West Eugene are at a greater risk for the breathing disorder. “Children in the 97402 or West Eugene area have on average over 14 percent rate of asthma and compare that to the rest of Eugene which is closer to 8 percent,” said Lisa Arkin, Beyond Toxics Director.

Beyond Toxics said 99 percent of air toxins in the Eugene area are produced in West Eugene. “Children who are closest to industrial polluters have a 77 percent greater chance of having asthma than the rest of our community,” said Arkin.

Medsker’s family sometimes has to go inside due to factory producing behind their home. “It smells really bad, and it smells bad like burning metal,” said Medsker.

After she smells it, she said her lungs start to feel the pain. “Sometimes she has to stay home from school cause it hurts so bad, makes her stomach hurt, we have some rough nights,” said Jessica Dupont, Medsker’s mother.

Another neighbor living in the area said he has never noticed a problem with the air and thinks Lane County overall has very clean air.

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