



## Zero Burn Coalition

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### Who We Are

[Membership info below](#)

The Zero Burn Coalition consists of over 50 organizations and hundreds of individuals including impacted community members, waste experts, non-profits, labor unions, businesses, and grassroots organizations. The coalition is dedicated to pursuing environmental justice for all and returning to zero waste, and is currently focused on shutting down the HERC trash burner in Minneapolis.

For over 35 years, HERC has been harming the environment & health of community members across Hennepin County and the metro. HERC is one of the biggest polluters in the county. It emits mercury, lead, carbon monoxide, dioxins (cancer-causing chemicals), and many other toxins into the air daily, poisoning our air and significantly contributing to the poor air quality of some of the most overburdened communities in MN.

To meet the gravity of the climate crisis, we must be bolder. We cannot continue to promote false solutions that prioritize profit over people. Our coalition is committed to closing HERC and co-creating a regenerative, sustainable, zero-waste society.

Generations of people have fought back against HERC, working toward a day when all Minnesotans can breathe clean, healthy air. The Zero Burn Coalition carries on this legacy

with the hope that the time for Environmental Justice is finally upon us. Our coalition centers on three primary demands:

**1. Set a closure date for HERC at the latest by 2028.**

It is possible and necessary to shut HERC down by 2025, as laid out in the HERC Shutdown Transition Plan prepared by Zero Waste USA. A shutdown date must be included in the [county closure plan](#).

Pursue funding and invest existing money into zero waste measures, not HERC. A trash burner is an easy out that prevents the county from developing the necessary policies and programs to address the burgeoning waste and climate crisis. Do not make improvements or upgrades that extend the life of HERC; only make necessary investments to improve air quality until HERC is shut down.

**2. Tell the whole truth, including that Hennepin County has made many millions of dollars from the loss of human life and the harm to countless people's health caused by HERC.**

For too long, the county has hidden HERC's existence, downplayed its risks and harms, and misrepresented its purpose (e.g., "waste to energy" is an unscientific, public relations lie: a quarter of trash burned becomes ash that must be landfilled, and the rest goes into the air). Provide accurate information that includes HERC's actual emissions; notices of violations and malfunctions; comprehensive monitoring information; and information on what cannot be destroyed or effectively filtered (e.g., PFAS and dioxins).

The county must also enable and empower the public and independent experts to evaluate any closure plan that county staff generate. We know that county staff will prioritize the loss of revenue from HERC's closure and de-prioritize the cost of human lives.

**3. Begin the long but necessary process of restitution.**

Ensure that HERC's historic harm is acknowledged. Guarantee that the frontline communities impacted by HERC determine what happens to the site after HERC closes and that demolition and removal are carefully done, unlike Detroit's reckless incinerator demolition. Do not leverage the suffering caused by HERC as a bargaining chip to get more money from the state.

## **Members of the Zero Burn Coalition Include:**

- **Rusty & The Crew**
- **Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate**
- **Science for the People TC**
- **COPAL**
- **Black Visions**
- **East Phillips Neighborhood Institute**
- **Climate Generation**
- **The Green Party of MN**
- **Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA)**
- **Minnesota Environmental Justice Table**
- **MN350**
- **Recycling Electronics for Climate Action (RECA)**
- **Sierra Club North Star Chapter**
- **Twin Cities DSA**
- **Sunrise Twin Cities**
- **UMN Students for Climate Justice**
- **Clean Water Action MN**
- **The Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL)**
- **Teamsters 320**
- **Minnesota Nurses Association**
- **Minneapolis Federation of Teachers**
- **Elliot Park Neighborhood Inc**
- **Heritage Park Neighborhood Association**
- **Center for Earth, Energy, and Democracy**
- **MNIPL**
- **Youth N' Power**
- **Environment Justice Coordinating Council (EJCC)**
- **Our Streets Minneapolis**
- **Community Power**
- **Metro Blooms**
- **Bancroft Neighborhood Association**
- **Webber Camden Neighborhood Organization**
- **Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association**
- **Whittier Alliance**

## Invitation to join as member:

Dear HERC Shut Down Supporter,

First, thank you for supporting our efforts to shut down the Hennepin County Energy Recovery garbage incinerator in downtown Minneapolis.

Since initiating the campaign and the petition you signed, a Zero Burn Coalition has been formed by impacted community members, waste experts, non-profits, labor unions, businesses, and grassroots organizations.

Coalition efforts have helped get the attention of both county staff and elected officials, who are now seriously discussing if and when to stop operations at the facility, with a key vote coming up this month.

Soon we will release a [draft transition plan](#) developed by Zero Waste USA that will show how a shutdown can be successfully accomplished well before the proposed 2040.

We are reaching out to you now to ask you, and your organization, to formally join our Zero Burn Coalition.

The Coalition is dedicated to pursuing environmental justice for all, specifically through the collective effort to shut down the HERC trash burner in Minneapolis and build real solutions for our communities.

As a member, you will be giving the Coalition permission to list your organization as a member in communications about it and to invite someone from your organization to join us at our regular coalition decision-making meetings where we share progress and plan next steps.

Please let us know if you have any questions and if we may include you or your organization as a member of the HERC Zero Burn Coalition.

Yours for a more just and healthier Minnesota,

The Zero Burn Coalition

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