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UNC at Chapel Hill faces allegations of burning coal in excess of permit limits

FEDERAL COURT

By [Marian Johns](#) | Dec 17, 2019

GREENSBORO, N.C. (Legal Newslane) – The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) is facing a lawsuit over allegations the school is burning more coal than permitted in violation of the Clean Air Act.

The Center for Biological Diversity and the Sierra Club filed a [complaint](#) Dec. 3 in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina against UNC alleging violations of the Clean Air act.

The plaintiffs allege in their complaint that UNC has violated its permit issued under Title V of the Clean Air Act by burning more coal in its boilers than permitted and has failed to maintain emissions records. They also claim the alleged emissions by UNC pose health risks such as asthma and decreased lung function that can cause premature mortality, particularly among young people.

The plaintiffs seek \$37,500 per day per violation for violations after Nov. 12, 2009, until Nov. 2, 2015; \$44,539 per day per violation for violations after Nov. 2, 2015, until Jan. 15, 2017; and \$45,268 per day per violation for violations after Jan. 15, 2017; \$100,000 in civil penalties and other just relief. [They are represented by Perrin de Jong of the Center for Biological Diversity in Asheville, North Carolina; Robert Ukeiley of the Center for Biological Diversity in Denver; and Bridget Lee of the Sierra Club in New York.](#)