Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I am writing to express concern about Denmark based Rockwool International, which produces stone wool insulation and operates 51 factories around the world. Jefferson County Vision (JCV), a nonprofit organization that supports environmentally sustainable growth in Jefferson County, West Virginia is joining forces with two other local nonprofit groups, Eastern Panhandle Green Coalition (EPGC) and West Virginians for Sustainable Development (WVSD), to expose alarming operations in Russia by Rockwool. These groups and thousands of Jefferson County citizens have been fighting Rockwool’s toxic heavy industry factory here, located just outside the Washington DC area, for several years.

Rockwool continues to operate its 4 factories in Russia despite that country’s invasion of Ukraine and a worldwide boycott of Russian companies and products. The Yale School of Management has issued a report which tracks over 1,000 companies with operations in Russia and gave Rockwool a grade of “D” under the category of continuing substantive business but postponing future investment/development. The company’s justification for operating in Russia has changed since the start of the war, as seen in corporate posts:

* **MARCH 2022**: “It would punish our own people and put at risk the livelihood of their families” They saw no contradiction between this policy and their claim in the same statement of standing side by side with the Ukrainian people, at a time over 1000 international corporations were ceasing operations in Russia.
* **NOVEMBER 2022**: “If Rockwool left Russia their factories would be nationalized or otherwise transferred to local players, we do not see how handing over more income and a well-functioning business to the Russian state would contribute to the end of the war.” Subsequently Rockwool stated they do not have a customer relationship with the Russian military although Rockwool became a member of the Russian Managers Association in July of 2022 which joined the Russian #WETOGETHER campaign in October directly supporting Russian war efforts.

A December 2022 AP article references video footage of pallets stacked with Rockwool insulation near a Russian construction project in the occupied Ukrainian city of Mariupol. The article states “Russia already has constructed at least 14 new apartment buildings—a small fraction of the number coming down—and is repairing at least two of the hospitals it damaged by shelling. Video shows rows of pallets stacked with insulation from the Danish company Rockwool, which maintains its division in Russia despite criticism.”

Rockwool shareholders in August 2022 approved a resolution to provide 100M to 200M DK for rebuilding in Ukraine, which included the statement “The amount approved today will only be used in areas **under control of the Ukrainian Government.”**

In addition, we highlight the ease by which Rockwool was granted approval for the regulated toxin-emitting plant with little transparency or adequate public hearings for the residents of the county in exchange for the promise of only 150 jobs. In response to a complaint filed by a coalition led by WVSD, the Danish authority that investigates corporate compliance with Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development guidelines found that Rockwool failed to adequately engage the community in plans for its factory, and failed to consider the impact its factory will have on local health, environment, and community during its site selection process. The factory is located across the street from North Jefferson Elementary School, at Title 1 school.

In our opinion, the Rockwool Russia story fits with a decades long corporate ethic that relies on opaque practices, greenwashing, and valuing of profits over the well-being of humans, and we are concerned to see the company continuing to operate in this manner.

We have released a press release in hopes of further investigation by the press, and look to West Virginia and Danish government officials to hold this megacorp accountable to legal and ethical standards. For citizens and builders, we encourage looking into other insulation choices which are widely available from other manufacturers and don’t use a toxic/high energy process to create, including those that are hemp, sheep wool, cellulose and cotton based.

Signed:

References:

[Russia scrubs Mariupol's Ukraine identity, builds on death | AP News](https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-war-erasing-mariupol-499dceae43ed77f2ebfe750ea99b9ad9)

[Over 1,000 Companies Have Curtailed Operations in Russia—But Some Remain | Yale School of Management](https://som.yale.edu/story/2022/over-1000-companies-have-curtailed-operations-russia-some-remain?company=Rockwool&country=)

[West Virginia environmentalists spark Rockwool investigation by international business group. - The Washington Post](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/west-virginia-insulation-factory-under-investigation-over-air-and-water-quality-complaints/2020/09/18/73966a2a-f903-11ea-a275-1a2c2d36e1f1_story.html)

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