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Air Enforcement: Alabama Department of Environmental Management and Russell County, Alabama Mineral Wool Production Facility Enter Into Consent Order Addressing Alleged Violations

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The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (“ADEM”) and IIG Min Wool, LLC (“IIG”) entered into a Consent Order (“CO”) addressing alleged air permit violations.

IIG operates a mineral wool production facility in Russell County, Alabama pursuant to a Major Source Operating Permit (No. 211-0013) (“Permit”).

Permit Proviso No. of the #1 Mineral Wool Cupola Furnace and Fiber Formation Collection Process found in the Emission Standards Section of the Permit provides:

The temperature in the fire box of the thermal oxidizer on the cupola shall not be less than 1,320 degrees Fahrenheit while the cupola is operating.

The Permit also provides in the Compliance Assurance Monitoring section (Permit Proviso No. 33(a)(4)):

Upon detecting an excursion or exceedance, the owner or operator shall restore the operation of the pollutant-specific emission units (including the control device and associated capture system) to its normal or usual manner of operation as expeditiously as practicable in accordance with good air pollution control practices for minimizing emissions...

ADEM is stated to have received on April 10, 2015 a notification from IIG that it was “experiencing problems maintaining the appropriate temperature for the incinerator”. The CO states:

... one such instance totaled 16 hours of the total 22 hours reported during the period from March 10, 2015 to July 24, 2015. Permittee’s explanation of the cause and subsequent corrective actions indicated that the alarm was silenced, which lead to 16 hours of the temperature requirement being exceeded.

ADEM issued a Notice of Violation regarding the previously referenced incident which required IIG to explain the circumstances surrounding the temperature malfunction and alarms being silenced.

IIG is stated to have responded that the temperature deviation was due to start-up issues, in which once the temperature dropped below the minimum requirement, the alarm sounded. The company acknowledged that it silenced the alarm and explained that the alarm is a “single event alarm” meaning that once silenced it does not become re-audible until the required minimum temperature threshold is

met. It was also stated that visible warning signs were overlooked on the operator control panel due to monitoring schematics allowing for the problem to be “layered into a subordinate screen”.

IIG neither admits nor denies ADEM’s contentions.

The CO assesses a civil penalty of \$7,500.

[Click here to download a copy of the CO.](#)