

Air Enforcement: Arkansas Department of Energy – Division of Environmental Quality and Monticello Lumber Yard/Sawmill Enter into Consent Administrative Order



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The Arkansas Department of Energy & Environment – Division of Environmental Quality (“DEQ”) entered into a February 9th Consent Administrative Order (“CAO”) with Interfor U.S. Inc. (“Interfor”) addressing an alleged violation of an air permit. See LIS No. 23-012.

The CAO provides that Interfor owns and operates a lumber yard and sawmill (“Facility”) in Monticello, Arkansas.

The Facility operates pursuant to an air permit.

DEQ is stated to have received three complaints forwarded by United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 6. Such complaints are stated to have indicated that the Facility was emitting sawdust particulate matter that was settling on neighboring properties.

An ADEQ investigation and partial compliance inspection was conducted at the Facility on February 16th.

During the complaint investigation, the CAO states that airborne saw dust particulate matter was observed and was settling on neighboring properties and covering outside furniture and cars.

Interfor is stated to have indicated during the partial compliance inspection that plant personnel noticed that the Cyclone was wearing out with holes starting to form and the metal being too thin to patch properly. In December 2021 the top was removed causing emissions to travel upward instead of to the side. As a result, the CAO provides that Interfor failed to operate the Cyclone within its design limitation and failed to maintain the Cyclone in good condition at all times, violating Plantwide Condition 5.

A replacement Cyclone was stated to be on order and projected to arrive in June 2022.

Interfor responded to a March 17th DEQ letter regarding the compliance issues stating:

Interfor acknowledges that the Planer Shavings and Sawdust Storage Cyclone (SN- 20) is in need of repair. Since discovery, Interfor has attempted multiple repairs in a continuous effort to resolve the issue to the best of its ability, as detailed below. Upon discovery of the issue with the cyclone, Interfor immediately issued a capital spending request on July 17, 2021, to replace the system that includes the cyclone. Interfor repaired the cyclone, SN-20, on April 3, 2022, and has resolved the upset condition. The repair is expected to last until a replacement system can be installed as a final corrective action.

DEQ is stated to have received a complaint of sawdust particles becoming airborne and settling on properties. Such complaint is stated to have been received by DEQ on May 18, 2022.

DEQ personnel conducted an investigation of the complaint on May 20th. It was determined that Interfor was allowing sawdust particulate matter to become airborne and settle on neighboring properties. Further, the CAO states:

While a truck was unloading wood chips onto a wood chip pile, DEQ personnel observed visible emissions coming from this activity. Further, DEQ personnel observed noticeable dust in the air as trucks traveled on roads around the wood chip piles.

Interfor submitted an Administrative Amendment application on April 25th to add a new fuel silo overflow pile to the insignificant activity list.

The DEQ Air Inspector for Interfor, in a letter dated June 9th, requested a Dust Management Plan (“DMP”) be submitted to DEQ within 15 days to address the particulate matter and dust that are becoming airborne and crossing the facilities boundary.

On June 1st Interfor submitted a DMP to DEQ that will be incorporated into its next Air Operating Permit. However, Interfor stated that due to unforeseen circumstances a new vendor had to be found for the replacement Cyclone. It is now projected to be delivered in the third or fourth quarter of 2022.

The CAO provides that Interfor neither admits nor denies the factual and legal allegations of the CAO. Further, within 30 calendar days of the CAO’s effective date, Interfor must submit a compliance plan and implementation schedule addressing the replacement of the Planer Shavings and Sawdust Storage Cyclone.

DEQ will review the plan and submit to Interfor a written request for additional information if needed. Any failure to submit information requested by DEQ shall be considered a violation of the CAO. Quarterly updates regarding the progress of the plan are required.

Corrective measures implemented pursuant to Paragraph 1 of the Order and Agreement of the CAO must be completed within 180 calendar days of the effective date of the CAO.

A civil penalty of \$4,080 is assessed.

A copy of the CAO can be downloaded [here](#).