

Alabama Department of Environmental Management and Mobile County Steel Mill Enter into Consent Order



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The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (“ADEM”) and SSAB Alabama Inc. (“SSAB”) entered into a January 24th Consent Order (“CO”) addressing an alleged violation of an air permit. See Consent Order No. 24-xxx-CAP.

The CO provides that SSAB operates a steel mill in Mobile County, Alabama.

The steel mill includes a Ladle Metallurgy Furnace (“LMF”). The LMF is operated pursuant to the authority of a Major Source Operating Permit (“Permit”).

Emissions from the LMF are stated to be collected by the close-capture hoods on the LMF ladle lids and controlled by a baghouse that is shared with the Facility Electric Arc Furnace.

ADEM is stated to have conducted an inspection of the facility on June 2nd, 2023, and observed considerable emissions escaping capture rather than being exhausted to the air pollution control device.

The agency subsequently issued a Notice of Violation (“NOV”) to SSAB citing the visible emissions from the LMF.

SSAB responded to the NOV stating:

. . . SSAB does not disagree that during the time of the inspection, emissions from the LMF were not being effectively captured by the LMF's emission control system. The event observed on the date of the inspection was a result of excessive slag carry over from the EAF due to poor slag raking. . . During such an event, the slag has very high oxygen content, causing a reactive heat when arcing or during the addition of alloys. This can cause excessive emissions that can overpower the LMF emissions capture system.

SSAB states that the emissions viewed by ADEM on the day of the inspection that were not being controlled in BH-01 were the result of an isolated incident as the result of an employee error in slag raking. Further, it states that the emissions observed were internal to the hot metal bay and did not result in an exceedance of specific emission limits or opacity limits applicable to the LMF operations.

SSAB further states that since the day of the inspection it has replaced the canopy hoods over the LMF to ensure fugitive emissions are minimized at all times.

SSAB neither admits nor denies ADEM's contentions.

A civil penalty of \$15,000 is assessed.

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