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## Air Enforcement: Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment - Division of Environmental Quality and Pine Bluff Vermiculite Mixtures Facility Enter into Consent Administrative Order

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The Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment – Division of Environmental Quality (“DEQ”) and Sun Gro Horticulture Processing Inc. (“Sun Gro”) entered into a July 24th Consent Administrative Order (“CAO”) addressing alleged violations of an Air Permit. See LIS No. 24-120.

Sun Gro is stated to own and operate a vermiculite, perlite, and horticultural mixtures facility (“Facility”) in Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

The Facility is stated to hold an Air Permit.

DEQ are stated to have conducted an inspection of the Facility on July 6th, 2023. The inspection is stated to have covered the reporting period of April 18th, 2018, through May 31st, 2023.

The inspection is stated to have determined that the Facility failed to submit records evidencing it conducted the initial PM testing SN-18 or SN-24 within 180 days of startup, violating the Specific Condition 11 of Permits R4 and R6.

Sun Gro responded to a DEQ query about the alleged violation but did not address the initial testing of SN-18 and SN-24.

Sun Gro is stated to have submitted an Air Compliance - Stack Testing Protocol form to DEQ for PM and opacity testing to be conducted on SN-18 or SN-24 on February 5th. Such testing is stated to have been conducted.

On April 11th, Sun Gro informed DEQ that it has been experiencing difficulties in maintaining optimal performance and meeting regulatory obligations due to the previous leadership. The Plant Manager is stated to have resigned suddenly and it was determined that air quality/emissions regulatory paperwork had not been submitted.

Sun Gro stated that the following measures were being undertaken to address the compliance issues:

- A thorough review of the internal processes, improved communication channels, and implemented new protocols to ensure timely and accurate submissions to the DEQ offices have been initiated.

- All schedules and documentation are now being submitted to the corporate office to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the submission procedures.

Sun Gro submitted emissions test results for the emissions testing conducted on February 5th at SN-24. The results of the emissions tests indicated that at the time of testing SN-24 was in compliance with the permitted emission limits.

Sun Gro neither admits nor denies the factual and legal allegations contained in the CAO.

A civil penalty of \$1,000.00 is assessed.

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