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MAYOR EMANUEL, ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN ANNOUNCE NEXT STEPS TO PROTECT RESIDENTS FROM PETCOKE DUST

Mayor Emanuel Introduces Regulations for Bulk Material Piles, Joins Attorney General Madigan in Agreed Order to Remove Petcoke Piles from Beemsterboer Facility

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Attorney General Lisa Madigan were joined today by Alderman John Pope, Alderman George Cardenas and leaders from environmental and community groups as they announced the next steps to protect residents from petroleum coke and metallurgical coke dust that has been stored on Chicago's southeast side.

Mayor Emanuel introduced municipal regulations for bulk material storage facilities while joining Attorney General Madigan in an agreed order filed today to require a pet coke storage operator to remove piles of the toxic refinery waste from its facility and to cease accepting additional waste materials while litigation proceeds against the company.

"Just as we fought to shutter the two remaining coal power plants in the city of Chicago, we are working to force these petroleum coke facilities to either clean up or shut down," said Mayor Emanuel. "These regulations will ensure that the facilities operate in a way that prevents the spread of pet coke into neighboring communities. While we are encouraged that our efforts are producing results, we will not rest until Chicago's children and families are protected from the potential hazards of these materials."

"The actions we are taking today mark a critical step forward in putting a stop to the serious public health threat facing the residents that live near these facilities, but we will continue to push for the strongest possible protections to ensure these conditions can never happen again here in Chicago and across the state," Attorney General Madigan said.

Proposed City of Chicago Regulations Require Full Enclosure

The proposed regulations will require large bulk material storage facilities to fully enclose solid materials such as coal, pig iron and petcoke, while facilities with smaller storage capacity and smaller deliveries would be required to install wind barriers as protective measures and adopt other best management practices. The draft regulations will be posted for public comment until

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January 24, 2014, and the City and Alderman John A. Pope will host a public hearing in the 10th ward in mid-January.

"We continue to make progress to stop petcoke dust from disrupting people's lives and forcing children and families in our communities indoors," said Ald. John Pope (10th). "These steps will allow our residents to host backyard barbecues and allow fresh air to come in through open windows."

Agreed Interim Order to Remove, Ban Additional Refinery Waste Materials

The agreed order filed today in Cook County Circuit Court with owner George J. Beemsterboer, Inc. and Beemsterboer Slag Corp., which operates the 22-acre facility along the Calumet River at 2900 E. 106th St., requires the company to remove piles of petcoke and met coke and to document where the materials are sent. The order also requires Beemsterboer to cease accepting any additional waste materials. According to the order, Beemsterboer must specify the start and completion dates for the work, and include the emissions control measures to be implemented during the waste product removal.

"Residents that live near these sites should soon see improved environmental conditions.," said Ald. George Cardenas, Chair of Committee on Health and Environment "We cannot place profits before our residents' quality of life, and we cannot allow companies to continue operations that may place the health of Chicago's children and families at risk."

Attorney General Madigan and the City of Chicago filed suit last month after the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's inspections revealed all the materials at the Beemsterboer facility were stored in the open and exposed to the elements without any covering or retaining structures to keep the materials from blowing into nearby neighborhoods. An operating permit issued by the IEPA allows for coal operations but does not authorize Beemsterboer to handle any other type of material such as pet coke and met coke.

"Protecting the environment and the well-being of everyone who can potentially be impacted by these petcoke piles is one of our top priorities," said Lisa Bonnett, Director of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. "After personally seeing these petcoke piles and how they are affecting the nearby community, it's clear more must be done and today's action from the Attorney General will help federal, state and local officials continue to work towards a comprehensive solution."

"For too long the southeast side has been a dumping ground for pet coke, coal, and other waste products from fossil fuels," said Jack Darin, Director of the Sierra Club, Illinois Chapter. "We applaud Mayor Emanuel's efforts to protect Chicago's neighborhoods from big polluters, and to move beyond coal and oil toward clean energy solutions."

"The regulations proposed today are an important stride towards protecting people and the environment from very harmful air pollution," said Henry Henderson, Midwest Director of the Natural Resources Defense Council. The harm of tar sands has come to Chicago. The City's action today is an important response to restrict an immediate part of that harm."

Pet coke is the solid by-product of petroleum refining which generally contains high concentrations of carbon and sulfur, and also may include trace elements of metals such as vanadium, nickel, chromium and lead. Met coke is produced by subjecting bituminous coal to extremely high temperatures to produce a harder fuel used in the iron and steel industries. Inhaling pet coke can contribute to serious respiratory health problems, particularly for individuals who suffer from heart and lung disease and asthma. The health effects of met coke are similar. Additionally, met coke is believed to be a toxic agent and a carcinogen.

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