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EPA Settles With Glens Falls' Lehigh Cement Co

by Editorial Staff

1 Comment



What follows is a press release issued by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Lehigh Cement Company LLC (Lehigh) and Lehigh White Cement Company, LLC (Lehigh White) have agreed to invest approximately \$12 million in pollution control technology at their 11 portland cement manufacturing plants in eight states to resolve alleged violations of the Clean Air Act, announced the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Justice. Today's settlement will reduce more than 4,555 tons of harmful nitrogen oxides (NOx) and 989 tons of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) pollution each year.

"Today's settlement will require these cement manufacturers to improve their operations to reduce harmful air pollutants," said Assistant Administrator of the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Susan Bodine. "The upgrades at these facilities will improve air quality for the surrounding communities."

"This settlement with Lehigh and Lehigh White will significantly reduce harmful air emissions at their cement plants nationwide," said Bruce Gelber, Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources Division. "The settlement is a product of the federal government's close work with state and local agencies who all share the goal of improving air quality in their regions in compliance with state and federal laws."

Under this settlement, the companies will install and operate equipment to control NOx and meet emission limits that are consistent with controls at comparable cement kilns across the country. This settlement also requires the companies to operate existing pollution controls at four kilns to meet tightened emission limits. For controlling SO₂, Lehigh will install and operate pollution control equipment at five or six kilns and will meet low SO₂ emission limits at all kilns.

Lehigh has agreed to mitigate the effects of past excess emissions from its facilities by replacing old diesel truck engines at its facilities in Union Bridge, MD, and Mason City, IA, at an estimated cost of approximately \$650,000, which is expected to reduce smog-forming NOx by approximately 25 tons per year. Lehigh will also pay a civil penalty of \$1.3 million to resolve Clean Air Act violations.

The settlement is the 12th settlement to address harmful air pollution from portland cement manufacturing facilities. Sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides, two key pollutants emitted from cement plants, can harm human health and are significant contributors to acid rain, smog, and haze. These pollutants are converted in the air into fine particles that can cause severe respiratory and cardiovascular impacts and premature death. Reducing these harmful air pollutants will benefit communities located near the Lehigh plants, particularly communities disproportionately impacted by environmental risks and vulnerable populations, including children.

The Lehigh cement plants covered by the settlement are located in Leeds, AL.; Cupertino, Redding, and Tehachapi, CA.; Mason City, IA; Mitchell, IN; Union Bridge, MD; Glens Falls, NY, and Fleetwood, PA. Lehigh White's facilities are located in York, PA and Woodway, TX. Seven state and

state or regional agencies have joined the United States in the settlement, consisting of Indiana, Iowa, Maryland, New York, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Jefferson County Board of Health (Alabama), and Bay Area Air Quality Management District (California).

The settlement was lodged today in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania and is subject to a 30-day public comment period and final court approval.