

Eastside NEWS Article - November 2002 Issue

SASYNA Asks USEPA to Act on Kipp Petition

In 1999 and 2000, hundreds of neighborhood residents attended public hearings hosted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources concerning the issuance of air pollution control permits to Madison-Kipp Corporation on Atwood Avenue. The permits allowed MKC to expand its die casting operations and install equipment to purify aluminum scrap using chlorine. After considering resident comments, the WDNR issued permits to MKC in 2001. In response, Clean Air Madison and neighborhood residents submitted a Title V petition to US Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Christine Todd Whitman, asking for an independent USEPA review of the WDNR decision. The petition identified shortcomings in the WDNR analysis supporting issuance of the permits and concludes the WDNR should not have approved expansion of the die casting plant. One important issue was WDNR approval of MKC operation without air pollution control equipment. The WDNR concluded that MKC discharges would be dispersed well enough to meet air quality standards. The petition identified faults in the WDNR dispersion analysis which had assumed MKC was located in a flat, rural farm field, rather than surrounded by homes in an urban setting.

USEPA has yet to respond to the Title V petition submitted in May of 2001. Earlier this year, Schenk / Atwood / Starkweather / Yahara Neighborhood Association wrote to USEPA Administrator Whitman encouraging USEPA to complete its review of the petition. At the urging of SASYNA, Senator Herb Kohl and Representative Tammy Baldwin also wrote to USEPA. In a response from the USEPA Region V office in Chicago, it was suggested a decision would be made "in a few months", which would be at the beginning of the summer. In a recent October 15th letter to Administrator Whitman, SASYNA is again urging USEPA to act on the petition. SASYNA notes: "Many of the issues raised in the petition address MKC's failure to comply with air pollution control requirements and air quality standards. If any of the arguments presented in the petition have merit, it is in the best interests of our neighborhood to have them resolved as soon as possible."

SASYNA goes on to note that: "This past summer, USEPA resolved lawsuits over hazardous air pollutant control requirements for aluminum die casters and foundries. This agreement will exempt these facilities, including MKC, from any need to control their discharges. This decision...reinforces the importance of USEPA completing its review of the pending Title V petition to assure the protection of residents surrounding MKC." Due to the lawsuit settlement, MKC will not be subject to the air pollution control regulations developed for secondary aluminum processing plants. These regulations would have required MKC to control its chlorine, particulate and dioxin emissions.

If you would like to get involved, you can contact Senator Kohl or Representative Baldwin. You can also participate in the neighborhood email discussion group, or view a copy of the Title V petition and October 15th letter by visiting the SASYNA web site at www.sasyna.org.

Steve Klafka
Neighborhood Resident
SASYNA Member