EPA FINALIZES AGREEMENT WITH PETROLEUM REFINERY

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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency finalized an agreement with BP Amoco, the nation’s second largest petroleum refinery, to resolve Clean Air Act violations at eight refineries owned by BP, Amoco and Arco (recently acquired by BP). The settlement is the second in a federal enforcement strategy for achieving across-the-board compliance with U.S. refineries (the government settled with Koch Petroleum Group in December).

The agreement was finalized in a consent decree filed in U.S. District Court in Hammond, Indiana, on Thursday, Jan. 18. It calls for BP to pay a civil penalty $9.5 million to the United States Treasury and $500,000 to the State of Indiana for monitoring and reducing volatile organic compounds in the vicinity of the Whiting refinery. The injunctive relief is estimated by BP to be approximately $600 million.

Under the settlement, BP will install and operate innovative pollution control technologies that will reduce emissions of nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide from refinery process units by more than 50,000 tons annually. In addition BP will implement comprehensive, facility-wide, enhanced monitoring and fugitive emission control programs; employ significantly improved engineering practices to eliminate excess flaring of hydrogen sulfide; undertake measures to ensure that carbon monoxide emissions from its process units meet applicable requirements; monitor incinerator performance and install monitoring and controls; and install particulate matter controls to comply with federal emission requirements.

The eight refineries are located in Carson, Calif.; Whiting, Ind.; Mandan, N.D.; Toledo, Ohio; Texas City, Texas; Salt Lake City, Utah; Yorktown, Va.; and Cherry Point, Wash. The proposed Consent Decree also resolves alleged violations under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act at BP’s Whiting, Ind., refinery. The United States was joined in this agreement by the states of Indiana and Ohio, as well as the Northwest Air Pollution Authority in Washington.

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