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Harris County Attorney's Office and Houston's AZA Law Firm Settle Environmental Case Against Shell Chemical



HOUSTON, Sept. 6, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Harris County Attorney Vince Ryan and the Houston complex commercial litigation law firm of [Ahmad, Zavitsanos, Anaipakos, Alavi & Mensing, P.C.](#) successfully represented Harris County in a case developed by the Harris County Pollution Control Services Department (HCPCS) against Shell Chemical L.P. that resulted in a \$500,000 payment to the county, and a mandate that Shell provide Harris County with actual notice of future air pollution events.

The attorneys determined that Shell owed the county for every day it failed to notify the county of five emissions releases at its Deer Park plant. Shell emitted petrochemicals into the air on five different dates (between April 2008 and March 2010), but failed to timely notify HCPCS of the events.

Though Shell did alert a state agency about these releases, Harris County determined that the company failed to follow the law and notify HCPCS within 24 hours of these releases from the plant, which is near schools and residential neighborhoods.

"The failure of a company as large and as prestigious as Shell to notify the county of serious air pollution releases was unacceptable. We are pleased that the company has accepted its responsibility and has agreed to work with us in the future," said Harris County Attorney Vince Ryan.

"This was an important case that made clear to Shell and other petrochemical companies that Harris County takes the health of its citizens seriously and will demand compliance with environmental laws," says Todd Mensing of the AZA law firm. "It was also important because it resulted in an important concession from Shell that it must alert HCPCS, and not just the state, of pollution events."

The case settled without Harris County filing a lawsuit.

For more information on this settlement please contact Rock Owens at (713) 755-9508 or rock_owens@hctx.net or Mary Flood at (800) 559-4534 or mary@androvett.com.

SOURCE Ahmad, Zavitsanos, Anaipakos, Alavi & Mensing, P.C.

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