Air Enforcement: Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment - Division of Environmental Quality and McGehee Rice Milling Plant Enter into Consent Administrative Order



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The Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment - Division of Environmental Quality ("DEQ") and Harvest Rice, LLC ("Harvest Rice") entered into a July 30th Consent Administrative Order ("CAO") addressing an alleged violation of an Air Permit. See LIS No. 25-060.

The CAO provides that Harvest Rice owns and operates a rice milling plant in McGehee, Arkansas.

The plant is stated to operate pursuant to an Air Permit.

DEQ personnel are stated to have performed a routine compliance inspection on March 12, 2024, and subsequently performed an inspection on April 5, 2024, in response to a complaint received April 3, 2024. The compliance inspection reporting period covered December 1, 2019, through January 31, 2024.

The CAO provides that during the inspections DEQ personnel observed VEs in excess of 0% at the baghouse (SN-06). This is alleged to violate Specific Conditions 3, 4, and 5 and General Condition 9 of the Permit.

In response to a DEQ question, Harvest Rice provided the following regarding the compliance issues:

1. SN-06 had multiple components malfunctioning. Respondent had, at the time, decided to replace SN-06 at an approximated cost of $750,000.00. The replacement was estimated to be accomplished thirty-five (35) weeks after May I, 2024 (January 1, 2025).
2. VEs were being released from the drag conveyor due to worn equipment in multiple areas of the mechanism. Respondent had decided to replace the drag conveyor. The cost of replacement was approximated at $110,000.00. The replacement was estimated to be accomplished fourteen (14) weeks after May I, 2024 (August 7, 2024).

Harvest Rice is also stated to have provided that since October 15, 2024, milling operations at the facility have been suspended and no further emission violations have occurred at the facility. In addition, the company indicated that, after further analysis of the cost of repairs and current market conditions, it has decided to continue the suspension of all milling activities at this location. Such suspension of all milling operations will ensure no further air emission violations will occur.

Harvest Rice neither admits nor denies the factual and legal allegations contained in the CAO.

The CAO requires that within 30 calendar days of its effective date Harvest Rice shall submit a request to void the Permit.

A civil penalty of $980.00 is assessed.

A copy of the CAO can be downloaded here.