



Press Advisory

Following are some Agency developments which may interest you. If you need more information on any of these subjects, call the appropriate contact.

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EPA AND OKLAHOMA TAKE IMPORTANT FIRST STEP IN PROMOTING REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL OF CONTAMINATED INDUSTRIAL PROPERTIES NATIONWIDE

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In a major step to promote the reuse potential of contaminated industrial properties nationwide, EPA and the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) recently issued the first "Ready For Reuse" certificate in the country to Sheffield Steel Corp., a 144-acre steel manufacturing plant in Sand Springs. With this certificate, the DEQ and EPA agree that Sheffield has successfully completed the cleanup of its property under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) hazardous waste cleanup program. This certificate verifies that environmental conditions on the property are sufficient for its current use and any anticipated future use as an industrial property. A "Ready For Reuse" certificate allows a potential buyer to make informed purchasing or development decisions based on information verified by EPA and the relevant state environmental regulatory agency. EPA's intention is to promote cleanups that encourage the reuse of formerly used industrial properties, thereby limiting the development of undeveloped tracts of land. For more information on the Oklahoma certificate, call Steve Gilrein, Associate Director for RCRA, EPA Region VI in Dallas, 214-665-8179 (gilrein.steve@epa.gov). To learn more about EPA's Land Revitalization Initiative nationwide, contact Stephen Luftig, Senior Advisor for Land Reuse, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, 703-603-9931 (luftig.steve@epa.gov).

EPA FUNDS NEW LABORATORY TO DEVELOP CLEAN-COAL TECHNOLOGIES

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EPA is helping to fund a new Ohio University lab to develop clean coal technologies. The lab officially opened at the end of May. Researchers there are developing new technologies to reduce emissions from coal-fired power plants with support from EPA, the Ohio Coal Development Office and the Ohio Board of Regents. Power generation contributes significant amounts of pollutants to our air, including sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, particulate matter and mercury. In particular, fine particles have been implicated in respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. This research could help coal, steel, paper and other industries meet EPA emissions regulations and improve air quality. The 3,000-square-foot laboratory will house research on more efficient versions of the electrostatic precipitator (ESP), a device used in the exhaust systems of power plants to capture fine air pollutants and toxic heavy metals. The work already has resulted in an ESP that uses flexible membranes to capture fly ash particles, which are produced when coal is burned for fuel. The device is an improvement over use heavy,

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expensive steel plates to clean fly ash from the exhaust stream. The laboratory will be used to examine other ways to make the ESP more environmentally efficient. The grant was awarded through EPA's Science to Achieve Results (STAR) program. This grant program is designed to engage the nation's best university scientists and engineers in environmental research. It funds research in numerous environmental science and engineering disciplines through a competitive solicitation process and independent peer review. For more information on this grant, go to: http://es.epa.gov/ncer_abstracts/grants/99/enveng/pasic.html. For more information on EPA's STAR program, go to: www.wpa.gov/ncer.

EPA, ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS COMMIT TO RESTORING DEGRADED URBAN RIVERS

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EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) committing them to a partnership for restoration of degraded urban rivers. As part of this agreement, EPA and the Corps will jointly select eight demonstration pilot projects over the next 12 months. In partnership with state and local governments, tribal authorities and private organizations, the projects will focus on water quality improvement, cleanup of contaminated sediments and human and animal habitat restoration. The projects will demonstrate how coordinated government and private sector efforts can not only restore contaminated rivers but also revitalize urban environments. The MOU aims to better coordinate hazardous waste cleanup, water quality improvements and environmental restoration activities under the Clean Water Act, Superfund, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and the various Water Resources Development Act authorities. (The Water Resources Development Act is a federal statute that addresses watershed environmental restoration activities under the authority of the Army Corps of Engineers.) For more information on the MOU, contact EPA's Stephen Luftig, Senior Advisor for Land Reuse, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, 703-603-9931 (luftig.steve@epa.gov) or Patricia Rivers, Chief, Environmental Division, Department of the Army, 202-761-0858.

ENFORCEMENT WRAP-UP

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LOUISIANA COMPANY FINED FOR WETLANDS DESTRUCTION

Tammany Holding, Corp., Slidell, La., pleaded guilty and was sentenced on July 3 to pay a \$300,000 fine for violating the Clean Water Act in 1997 and 1998 by illegally filling a wetland without a permit. The company also violated the Rivers and Harbors Act in 1997 when it dredged and discharged material into Lake Ponchartrain without a permit while in the process of building the Lakeshore Estates development near Lake Ponchartrain. Tammany also will pay \$38,000 in restitution to four environmental groups: \$20,000 to the Lake Ponchartrain Basin Foundation, \$10,000 to the Louisiana Environmental Action Network, \$5,000 to the Southern Environmental Enforcement Network and \$3,000 to Keep Our Peaceful Environment. Wetlands are important natural areas where surface waters are naturally cleansed of pollutants and many species of fish and wildlife live. The case was investigated by EPA's Criminal Investigation Division, the U.S. Coast Guard Investigative Services and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with the assistance of EPA's National Enforcement Investigations Center. It was prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's office in New Orleans.

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COLORADO MAN SENTENCED TO 17-YEARS IMPRISONMENT, \$100,000 FINE

In a Colorado state case co-investigated by EPA's Criminal Investigation Division (CID) and National Enforcement Investigations Center (NEIC), Hormoz Pourat was sentenced on July 3 to serve 17 years in prison and pay a \$100,000 fine for violating Colorado's Organized Crime Control Act. He is one of the principal managers and owners of a hazardous waste management company known as AAD, which operated in Colorado and California. He also was ordered to pay cleanup and the investigative costs of Colorado's Jefferson County District Court. AAD was a dry cleaning waste disposal company that accepted waste perchloroethylene dry cleaning solvent from dry cleaners throughout the western United States. AAD operated a hazardous waste treatment, storage and disposal facility in Vernon, Calif., and operated a transfer facility in Lakewood, Colo., which also received waste from California and repackaged it for shipment to hazardous waste landfills in Idaho and Nevada. The defendant pleaded guilty to different charges: that AAD's waste handling activities resulted in the illegal storage of hazardous wastes in Colorado; false descriptions of shipments of untreated wastes in order to have the waste illegally buried in Idaho and Nevada; misrepresentations to public servants, including Colorado Department of Health inspectors; and theft of money from dry cleaners who paid for legal waste disposal. Improper handling and disposal of dry cleaning wastes can present a significant health hazard. The case was investigated by EPA's CID and NEIC, environmental agencies of Colorado and California and Jefferson County, Colo., law enforcement agencies. It was prosecuted by the Colorado Attorney General's office in Denver.

FORMER KANSAS LAB OWNER PLEADS GUILTY TO FRAUD, FALSEHOODS

Terian Koester, former owner of QWAL Laboratories in Pittsburgh, Kan., pleaded guilty on July 3 to mail fraud and making false statements in violation of the Clean Water Act (CWA). In his plea, the defendant admitted that his laboratory deliberately falsified tests performed on water samples performed for clients who had CWA discharge permits. Falsifying water sample tests results can cause the discharge of waters with higher than permitted levels of pollutants, making surface waters unsuitable for drinking, recreation and the support of aquatic life and wildlife. When sentenced, Koester faces a maximum sentence of up to seven years imprisonment and/or a fine of up to \$260,000. The case was investigated by EPA's Criminal Investigation Division with assistance from EPA's National Enforcement Investigations Center. It is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's office in Kansas City.

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