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Honeywell Resins and Chemicals to pay $3 million penalty, upgrade air pollution controls at Hopewell, Va. plant

PHILADELPHIA (March ??, 2013) – To settle a lawsuit by the United States and Virginia, Honeywell Resins and Chemicals LLC has agreed to pay a $3 million civil penalty for alleged Clean Air Act violations at its Hopewell, Va., plant, and improve the facility's air pollution control equipment and processes, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced today.

The proposed consent decree resolves violations of federal and state air pollution regulations at the Hopewell plant, the world's largest single-site producer of caprolactam used in the production of nylon, and ammonium sulfate used for fertilizer. According to the complaint filed by EPA and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, the facility violated Clean Air Act limits on emissions of nitrogen oxide (NOx), benzene and other volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and particulate matter. The plant also allegedly failed to comply with requirements to upgrade air pollution control equipment, to detect and repair leaks of hazardous air pollutants, and to develop safeguards on benzene waste.

In addition to the $3 million civil penalty, Honeywell has agreed to reduce harmful air pollutants, install selective catalytic reduction at four production trains at the facility, conduct a third-party benzene waste operations audit, and implement an enhanced leak detection and repair program at the facility. Honeywell will also perform a mitigation project valued at approximately $300,000 at the facility. The settlement reduces annual emissions of NOx by about 6,260 tons, and cuts annual emissions of benzene, other VOCs and hazardous air pollutants by 100 tons. The estimated cost for injunctive relief to address these emissions will be approximately $66 million dollars.

As part of the settlement, Honeywell did not admit liability for the violations, but has certified that it is now in compliance with applicable Clean Air Act regulations. The proposed consent decree is subject to a 30 day public comment period and final court approval. For more information, see _____ [link to announcement of CD].

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