Message

From: Delgrosso, Karen [Delgrosso.Karen@epa.gov]
Sent: 2/2/2021 7:06:02 PM
To: Opila, MaryCate [Opila.MaryCate@epa.gov]; Fernandez, Cristina [Fernandez.Cristina@epa.gov]
CC: Supplee, Gwendolyn [Supplee.Gwendolyn@epa.gov]
Subject: RE: PRESS QUERY: Rockwool Plant in West Virginia

I am happy to send to the larger group, MaryCate, and will do so shortly. Thanks, Karen

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From: Opila, MaryCate <Opila.MaryCate@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, February 02, 2021 2:04 PM
To: Fernandez, Cristina <Fernandez.Cristina@epa.gov>; Delgrosso, Karen <Delgrosso.Karen@epa.gov>
Cc: Supplee, Gwendolyn <Supplee.Gwendolyn@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: PRESS QUERY: Rockwool Plant in West Virginia

Thanks. Who should forward to the larger group? I'm ok with Karen's change ass well.

Mary Cate Opila, P.E., Ph.D.
Chief, Permits Branch
Air & Radiation Division
EPA Region 3
Mail Code: 3AD10
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-814-2041

From: Fernandez, Cristina <Fernandez.Cristina@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, February 02, 2021 1:58 PM
To: Opila, MaryCate <Opila.MaryCate@epa.gov>; Delgrosso, Karen <Delgrosso.Karen@epa.gov>
Cc: Supplee, Gwendolyn <Supplee.Gwendolyn@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: PRESS QUERY: Rockwool Plant in West Virginia

OK with me. Thanks!

Cristina Fernandez, Director
Air & Radiation Division (3AD00)
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 3
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-2023
Work: (215) 814-2178
Cell: (215) 375-0847

From: Opila, MaryCate <Opila.MaryCate@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, February 02, 2021 1:22 PM
To: Fernandez, Cristina <Fernandez.Cristina@epa.gov>; Delgrosso, Karen <Delgrosso.Karen@epa.gov>

Cc: Supplee, Gwendolyn <Supplee.Gwendolyn@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: PRESS QUERY: Rockwool Plant in West Virginia

Hi Cristina and Karen,

See below for a proposed response to the first question in the reporter's email.

Please let us know of any issues or changes.

Proposed response:

Q: Jefferson County community residents have stated EPA Region 3 needs to provide more oversight on the WVDEP, including forcing Rockwool to submit a new air quality permit reflective of a change in fuel sources (from coal and natural gas to just natural gas to ensure the use of best available control technologies for natural gas). Has EPA Region 3 determined whether or not Rockwool should submit a new air quality permit? If so, why? If not, why not?

A: As mentioned previously, the air permitting program is fully delegated to the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP), and EPA is a co-regulator. In regards to the "change in fuel sources" mentioned in the question, Rockwool provided notification to WVDEP in a letter dated March 2, 2020 that it planned "to operate the Melt Furnace using only natural gas, as allowed under Permit No. R14-0037." On August 5, 2020, WVDEP replied to the July 29, 2020, Jefferson County Foundation letter regarding the same topic, saying that "Permit R14-0037, as issued on April 30, 2018 is and remains valid for the construction and proposed operation of the facility. It is important to note that no Administrative Updates, regardless of class, have been issued, or are warranted..." WVDEP consulted with EPA prior to issuing this letter- EPA reviewed the permit and associated letters, and found WVDEP's conclusion that the proposed operation of the Melt Furnace using only natural gas is allowable under Permit No. R14-0037 to be reasonable.

From: Sternberg, David <Sternberg.David@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, February 02, 2021 11:10 AM
To: Landis, Jeffrey <Landis.Jeffrey@epa.gov>; Seneca, Roy <Seneca.Roy@epa.gov>
Cc: White, Terri-A <White.Terri-A@epa.gov>; Nitsch, Chad <Nitsch.Chad@epa.gov>; Delgrosso, Karen <Delgrosso.Karen@epa.gov>; Fernandez, Cristina <Fernandez.Cristina@epa.gov>; Febbo, Carol <febbo.carol@epa.gov>; Chow, Alice <chow.alice@epa.gov>; Opila, MaryCate <Opila.MaryCate@epa.gov>; Ferrell, Mark <Ferrell.Mark@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: PRESS QUERY: Rockwool Plant in West Virginia

Looping in Christina, Carol, Alice, MaryCate and Mark to get your thoughts regarding his first follow up question (below).

Let me know. Thanks,

David

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From: Landis, Jeffrey <Landis.Jeffrey@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, February 02, 2021 10:55 AM
To: Sternberg, David <Sternberg.David@epa.gov>; Seneca, Roy <Seneca.Roy@epa.gov>
Cc: White, Terri-A <White.Terri-A@epa.gov>; Nitsch, Chad <Nitsch.Chad@epa.gov>; Delgrosso, Karen <Delgrosso.Karen@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: PRESS QUERY: Rockwool Plant in West Virginia
Importance: High

David,

It appears we have some follow-ups from this freelance reporter about the Rockwool Plant in WV. Question 1 we will field through ARD, and I will pass along Question 2 to HQ OPA, although it ought to go through the WHMO.

Also, please see our responses we sent to the reporter previously (attached). Thanks.

r/ Jeff Landis
Senior Media Relations/Press Officer & Executive Events Coordinator
Region 3 Office of Public Affairs (3RA21)
215-814-2921; mobile 215-901-7424

From: Austyn Gaffney <austyn.gaffney@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 10:42 AM
To: Landis, Jeffrey <Landis.Jeffrey@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: PRESS QUERY: Rockwool Plant in West Virginia

Hi Jeffrey,

I had some followup questions for EPA Region 3. If you could answer, or provide any additional comment, by Thursday EOD, it would be greatly appreciated.

Questions:

Jefferson County community residents have stated EPA Region 3 needs to provide more oversight on the WVDEP, including forcing Rockwool to submit a new air quality permit reflective of a change in fuel sources (from coal and natural gas to just natural gas to ensure the use of best available control technologies for natural gas). Has EPA Region 3 determined whether or not Rockwool should submit a new air quality permit? If so, why? If not, why not?

Jefferson County community residents have stated they are "cautiously optimistic" the federal EPA will become a more forceful institution under a Biden administration, including stricter oversight of the Clean Air and Water Acts. Does Biden plan on increasing EPA's oversight over the states? Is there a timeline? If so, why? If not, why not?

Best,
Austyn

On Fri, Jan 15, 2021 at 2:25 PM Landis, Jeffrey <Landis.Jeffrey@epa.gov> wrote:

> Austyn,

Thanks for your patience. Please see our response below as well as two attachments.

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EPA Responses:

Q1) Would the Rockwool plant's projected emissions (linked here) violate any EPA standards? Specifically, would any of the emissions violate any EPA standards according to Rockwool's own estimates?

A1: The linked document is Rockwool's Clean Air Act Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) permit application submitted to West Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (WVDEQ) on November 20, 2017. Under the provisions of the federal Clean Air Act (CAA), EPA and WVDEQ are co-regulators but the permitting program is fully delegated to WVDEP. WVDEP advertised a draft air quality permit for public notice on March 28, 2018. EPA reviewed Rockwool's draft permit for applicability of state and federal air emission control requirements. WVDEP addressed EPA's comments and issued the permit to Rockwool on April 30, 2019. EPA believes WVDEP addressed all relevant federal and state requirements, including addressing our comments, before issuing the final PSD permit to Rockwool.

Q2) Has EPA Region 3 replied to the letter Jefferson County Foundation sent on July 21, 2020 (attached)? If so, can I have a copy of the EPA's response? If not, why has the EPA not yet responded, and what might the EPA's conclusions be based on the letter?

A2: EPA Mid-Atlantic Region received a letter from the Jefferson County Foundation, Inc., on July 9, 2020 (not July 21, 2020), with the subject of "Advisory: That West Virginia Entities Are Being Allowed to Operate Construction Projects In Violation of the Clean Water Act and Request for Stop Work." A response to that letter was sent to JCF on Aug. 10, 2020. Both the original letter and EPA Mid-Atlantic Region's response have been attached to this correspondence. The response underscores simply that EPA cannot comment on an ongoing or active litigation. As for the letter you mentioned dated July 21, 2020, addressed to David Ross, EPA's Office of Water, please contact the Office of Water by emailing Press@epa.gov.

On Jan 14, 2021, at 2:23 PM, Seneca, Roy <Seneca.Roy@epa.gov> wrote:

Austyn – I work in the EPA Region 3 press office and your inquiry was passed on to me. We are working on getting you a response. I will be off tomorrow so please contact my supervisor Jeff Landis if need anything further. Also, can you let us know what media you are writing for? Thanks. – Roy

Roy Seneca

EPA Region 3 Press Officer

Office of Public Affairs

seneca.roy@epa.gov

(215) 814-5567

From: Austyn Gaffney <austyn.gaffney@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2021 8:43 AM
To: R3 RA <R3_RA@epa.gov>; Libertz, Catherine <Libertz.Catherine@epa.gov>; pricefay.michelle@epa.gov
Subject: PRESS QUERY: Rockwool Plant in West Virginia

Hi Region 3 EPA,

I'm a reporter working on a story about the Rockwool plant in West Virginia and I had some specific questions I was hoping the Region 3 EPA staff could answer.

1) Would the Rockwool plant's projected emissions (linked here) violate any EPA standards?

Specifically, would any of the emissions violate any EPA standards according to Rockwool's own estimates?

2) Has EPA Region 3 replied to the letter Jefferson County Foundation sent on July 21, 2020 (attached)? If so, can I have a copy of the EPA's response? If not, why has the EPA not yet responded, and what might the EPA's conclusions be based on the letter?

My deadline is Friday EOD; please let me know if that's possible for you to meet, and if a phone call would be faster (270-784-1257).

All best,

Austyn

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Austyn Gaffney

Freelance Reporter

270-784-1257 | @austyngaffney

www.austyngaffney.com

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Austyn Gaffney
Freelance Reporter
270-784-1257 | @austyngaffney
www.austyngaffney.com