
Pennsylvania issues shutdown notice to Erie Coke

Monday, 31 May, 2010

Erie Coke Corp a merchant producer of metallurgical coke for foundries and steelmakers has been granted a temporary stay from a shutdown order issued by Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection.

On May 24, regulators cited the plant in Erie for violating state environmental laws, revoked its air quality permit and ordered the company to cease operations within 72 hours.

The subsequent stay of the order extends the deadline until June 1. Erie Coke has not commented on the developments.

Erie Coke operates two coke batteries with total of 58 ovens, both of which were installed more than 50 years ago.

The closing order was described as a last resort by the Dept. of Environmental Protection's Northwest regional director.

Ms Kelly Burch stated in a release that "We've tried to work with the company to correct multiple ongoing environmental violations so that it could maintain and operate a clean and safe plant that meets the letter of the law."

She continued that "Since 2006, DEP has inspected Erie Coke's facility numerous times. Those inspections have revealed a pattern of defiant behavior and complete disregard for the health of our citizens and the quality of our natural resources. Our inspections indicate that the coke ovens at the facility are cracked and emitting pollutants."

The agency said the company's ownership has shown little intention to correct violations that led to several previous citations. The same ownership group controls Tonawanda Coke Corp near Buffalo which is similarly under scrutiny for operating in violation of state and federal environmental laws.

(Sourced from www.stumbleupon.com)

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