

June 26, 2019

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL FILES LAWSUIT, INJUNCTION OVER MADISON COUNTY HAZARDOUS WASTE SPILL

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul filed a lawsuit and a motion for preliminary injunction in Madison County Circuit Court against PDC Services, Inc., after a semitrailer spilled electric arc furnace (“EAF”) dust, a hazardous waste, on a public road in the village of Hamel, Ill.

The lawsuit and motion seek to require PDC Services to complete the removal of all EAF dust in the area of the spill. In addition to the filings, the court entered an agreed injunction order requiring PDC Services to further investigate the site to determine the full extent of the contamination, and to clean up the impacted area. The order also requires PDC Services to submit a report describing what caused the spill and how the company plans to prevent future spills. PDC Services also is required to decontaminate the exterior and interior of any vehicle that drove through the EAF dust on the roadway, at the request of the vehicle’s owner.

“This spill resulted in a significant amount of a hazardous waste being dumped onto the roadway, jeopardizing public health and the environment,” Raoul said. “My office filed this lawsuit to ensure that the company continues to cooperate with efforts to clean up the contamination and address any additional effects to residents, businesses and vehicles.”

On June 11, a semitrailer operated by PDC Services spilled reportedly at least 1,000 pounds of EAF dust at the intersection of Route 140 and Route 157 in Hamel. The driver of semitrailer suddenly applied his brakes, causing the load in the trailer to shift and tear through the tarp on the top of the trailer, which had been held in place by rubber bungee cords. EAF dust is a byproduct of the steelmaking process and is considered toxic, as it contains lead, cadmium and hexavalent chromium.

The case was referred to the Attorney General’s office by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

“This incident significantly impacted the local environment and directly impacted residents, along with personal and commercial property,” Illinois EPA Director John J. Kim said. “This action will ensure the company is committed to the remediation of environmental impacts and any impacts to the local community, and Illinois EPA will work closely with Attorney General Raoul to bring this incident to closure.”

Assistant Attorneys General Raymond Callery and Natalie Long are handling the case for Raoul’s Environmental Bureau.