



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60604**

SUBJECT: CLEAN AIR ACT INSPECTION REPORT
Apex Recycling Services, Fairmont City, Illinois

FROM: Karina Kuc, Environmental Engineer
AECAB (IL/IN)

THRU: Nathan Frank, Section Supervisor
AECAB (IL/IN)

TO: File

BASIC INFORMATION

Facility Name: Apex Recycling Services

Facility Location: 1245 N 1st St, Fairmont City, IL 62201

Date of Inspection: September 20, 2023

EPA Inspector(s):

1. Karina Kuc, Environmental Engineer
2. Tess Russell, Environmental Engineer
3. Natalie Topinka, Environmental Scientist

Other Attendees:

1. Frank Sophie, Site Manager

Contact Email Address: fsophie@apex-recycling.com

Purpose of Inspection: assess compliance with refrigerant safe disposal regulations

Facility Type: scrap metal recycler

Regulations Central to Inspection: 40 C.F.R. Part 82

Arrival Time: 3:10 pm

Departure Time: 4:00 pm

Facility Name: Apex Recycling Services
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Inspection Type:

- ☒ Unannounced Inspection
- ☐ Announced Inspection

OPENING CONFERENCE

- ☒ Presented Credentials
- ☒ Stated authority and purpose of inspection
- ☒ Provided Small Business Resource Information Sheet: provided via email with inspection report
- ☒ Provided CBI warning to facility

The following information was obtained verbally from Apex Recycling Services staff unless otherwise noted.

Process Description: Apex Recycling Services (Apex) has been open at the Fairmont City location for 15 years and operates with 40 employees. Apex owns two locations. The business accepts ferrous and non-ferrous scrap metals for recycling, including small appliances, from peddlers and commercial accounts. Apex does not accept whole vehicles, only components.

Staff Interview: Apex's policy is that they will not accept an appliance with a sealed unit. If they accidentally accept an appliance with refrigerant, they put it to the side and have it recovered by a 3rd party. They accept appliances with cut lines. Peddlers sign a scale purchase ticket that does not have any language regarding refrigerants. Apex does not have contracts with commercial customers but rather keeps a copy of their business license. Apex accepts at least 1-10 appliances/day.

TOUR INFORMATION

EPA Tour of the Facility: Yes

Data Collected and Observations: EPA observed the scrap pile being loaded into an outgoing truck and saw one water cooler with an intact refrigeration line, one refrigerator with cut lines, and one refrigerator with the compressor removed. Apex also had set aside four intact refrigerators and one water cooler for recovery. Apex does not have a sign regarding its refrigerant policy visible onsite.

Photos and/or Videos: were taken during the inspection.

Field Measurements: were not taken during this inspection.

RECORDS REVIEW

1. Apex's record of 3rd party refrigerant recovery
2. Apex's scale ticket

CLOSING CONFERENCE

☒ Provided U.S. EPA point of contact to the facility

Compliance Assistance: EPA gave an overview of the requirements of 40 C.F.R. Part 82, Subpart F as they apply to scrap metal recyclers.

Concerns: Apex accepts appliances that have not had the refrigerant properly recovered. Apex does not use a signed statement with peddlers requiring the supplier to provide the name and address of who recovered refrigerant and the date it was recovered prior to delivery, in accordance with 40 C.F.R. §82.155(b). . Signage and brochures at the facility entrance do not inform customers of requirements for proper refrigerant recovery before delivery. Apex's practice of rejecting appliances with "sealed units" but without requiring documentation of proper refrigerant recovery prior to delivery incentivizes customers to improperly vent refrigerant. As evidenced by the water cooler with intact refrigeration line in the scrap pile, Apex is not adequately inspecting appliances.

DIGITAL SIGNATURES

Report Author: **KARINA KUC** Digitally signed by KARINA KUC
Date: 2023.10.13 14:41:41 -05'00'

Section Supervisor: **NATHAN FRANK** Digitally signed by NATHAN FRANK
Date: 2023.10.18 10:59:34 -05'00'

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APPENDICES AND ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Digital Image Log

Facility Name: Apex Recycling Services
Facility Location: 1245 N 1st St, Fairmont City, IL
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APPENDIX A: DIGITAL IMAGE LOG

1. Inspector Name: Tess Russell	2. Archival Record Location: Region 5 Electronic Records Center
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Image Number	File Name	Date and Time (CST)	Description of Image
1	IMG_1540.jpg	9/20/2023 3:12 pm	Signage in front of Apex
2	IMG_1541.jpg	9/20/2023 3:24 pm	Scale receipt
3	IMG_1542.jpg	9/20/2023 3:33 pm	Box of compressors
4	IMG_1543.jpg	9/20/2023 3:36 pm	Scrap pile being loaded into truck
5	IMG_1544.jpg	9/20/2023 3:37 pm	Refrigerator with cut line
6	IMG_1545.jpg	9/20/2023 3:37 pm	Intact water cooler
7	IMG_1546.jpg	9/20/2023 3:41 pm	Scrap pile
8	IMG_1547.jpg	9/20/2023 3:41 pm	Cut line
9	IMG_1548.jpg	9/20/2023 3:41 pm	Accidental photo
10	IMG_1548.jpg	9/20/2023 3:43 pm	Intact appliance
11	IMG_1550.jpg	9/20/2023 3:44 pm	Appliances set aside for recovery