

VCM Plant

Conoco Chemicals
Continental Oil Company
P.O. Box 605
Westlake, Louisiana 70669
(318) 882-0550

John
file
(NESHAPS)
4.4.1.
#04148

April 5, 1977

Mr. Paul Fahrenthold, Chief Engineering Section
Air Compliance Branch
United States Environmental Protection Agency
First International Building
1201 Elm Street
Dallas, TX 75270

Dear Mr. Fahrenthold:

With reference to your letter related to release of information from our file under the Freedom of Information Act, I have been in touch with Mr. G. Bernath by phone and indicated to him our desire to review this information before release. We intend being at your office on April 7, 1977 on another matter and will take this opportunity to review our file at that time. Mr. Bernath has indicated he will have the file available for review on this date.

Sincerely,



J. A. DeBernardi
Manager - VCM Plant
Westlake, La.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

45-04148

APR 01 1977

Mr. John H. McCulley
Continental Oil Company
P. O. Box 695
Westlake, Louisiana 70669

Dear Mr. McCulley:

Your letter of March 1, 1977, requesting clarification as to this office's enforcement policy regarding excess emissions due to malfunction of equipment, has been received.

This is to inform you that there are no provisions for excess emissions during startup, shutdown, and malfunction. Our enforcement policy is not based on a "strict interpretation" of the regulations; it is not based on any interpretation at all. Rather, we are adhering to the policy which is explicitly expressed in the preamble to the vinyl chloride regulations. In the preamble, it is stated "We do not believe plants should be allowed to emit excess emissions during malfunction, and therefore are requiring them to shut down immediately."

This is based on the fact that vinyl chloride has been implicated as the causal agent of angiosarcoma and other serious disorders, both carcinogenic and non-carcinogenic. The purpose of EPA's regulations is to minimize vinyl chloride emissions into the ambient air and thereby minimize the health risks of the people living in the vicinity of these plants. As expressed in the preamble (quoted in part above), EPA did consider whether to incorporate a provision for excess emissions during start-up, shutdown, and malfunction. In light of the significant health consequences which may result from re-occurring malfunctions, the Agency does not believe plants should be allowed to emit excess emissions during malfunctions. Unless back-up controls are available, the Agency will require the subject source to shut down immediately.

Until and unless the regulation is amended, this will remain our policy. Should you have any questions concerning this, you may contact Mr. Gary Bernath of my staff by telephone at (214) 749-7675.

Sincerely,
ORIGINAL SIGNED BY
O. W. LIVELY, JR.

FOR

Howard G. Bergman
Director, Enforcement Division

Gib 3-28-77
5AEA:GABernath:jeb:X7675:3/28/77

Ed Reich, Director, DSCCURRENCES

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DATE	3-31-77						

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NOV 20 1976

Mr. Jack Cearley
Mr. John McCulley
Conoco
P. O. Box 605
Westlake, Louisiana 70669

Gentlemen:

Enclosed is a major portion of a document authored by the Washington office of the Environmental Protection Agency for the Regional offices to use as an aid in implementing the vinyl chloride regulations. This document does not have the force of law and is being sent to you merely for your aid and information. It does respond to several topics discussed during the meeting held at this office on November 19, 1976.

Sincerely,

Bennett Stokes
Attorney
Enforcement Division

Enclosure

6AEA:BStokes:smc:X7675:11/24/76

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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NOV 12 1976

CERTIFIED MAIL: RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED (489984)

Continental Oil Company
P. O. Box 605
Westlake, Louisiana 70669

Dear Sir:

As you may already be aware, the National Emission Standard for the Hazardous Air Pollutant vinyl chloride was promulgated on October 21, 1976. (Copy enclosed) As an affected facility, you will be required to be operating in compliance with the emission standard, or be operating subject to an approved waiver of compliance, within 90 days of the effective date, or by January 21, 1977.

This is to advise you that if you feel that your facility can operate in compliance with the emission standard, you are required to conduct performance tests in accordance with the test procedures promulgated under Section 61.67, no later than January 21, 1977. The Section also requires that you provide this office at least 30 days notice prior to the tests so we may have an observer present.

If your facility cannot operate in compliance with the emission standards by January 21, 1977, you may apply for a waiver of compliance in accordance with Section 61.11. It is important that such a waiver be applied for in a timely manner so you may be assured that by January 21, 1977, you will be operating under an approved waiver. This office is allowed 60 days for such review.

Although this letter is being sent to assist you in complying with the law, you are of course charged with the knowledge of the requirements of the law and of the applicable regulations upon their publication.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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Should you have any questions concerning this, you may contact Mr. Gary Bernath of my staff by letter to this office or by telephone at (214) 749-7675.

Sincerely,

O. W. Lively
Acting Director
Enforcement Division

enclosure

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

#04148

09 NOV 1976

Continental Oil Company
P. O. Box 605
Westlake, Louisiana 70669

Dear Sir:

You are probably aware that regulations were promulgated on October 21, 1976, which require control of emissions of vinyl chloride. (41 Federal Register 46560). It is our understanding that your plant may be subject to these regulations, and we have already sent copies of the regulations to your plant.

In part because of the complexity of plants which emit vinyl chloride, the regulations are complex. In addition, new regulations usually create many questions of interpretation. We believe that a meeting between EPA and the industry to discuss these new regulations would be helpful to both of us.

We propose that a meeting be held between EPA working-level technical and legal personnel and industry technical and environmental personnel who will be working with the regulations. Although there is a significant number of plants in the five state region in which we work, we believe that the meeting could be kept small enough to have some general discussions of problems as well as answering specific questions of interest. In order to have the maximum number of EPA personnel available to respond to questions, we believe that such a meeting could best be held in Dallas.

We are therefore scheduling a meeting on the vinyl chloride regulations for Friday, November 19, 1976, to begin at 9:00 A.M. in our offices on the 29th floor of the First International Building, 1201 Elm Street, Dallas, Texas. If one or

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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FEB 28 1977

Mr. J. A. DeBernardi
Continental Oil Company
P. O. Box 605
Westlake, Louisiana 70669

Dear Mr. DeBernardi:

Your waiver request package dated December 21, 1976, has been received and evaluated.

This is to inform you that we cannot complete our evaluation until you submit additional information relative to your waiver request. Generally, you have not identified which portions or particular paragraphs of the vinyl chloride regulations for which you are in need of a waiver. We cannot issue a general waiver for the entire vinyl chloride regulations. Additionally, you have not adequately identified each piece of equipment, vent, or stream, for which you are in need of a waiver.

Your response to the items listed in the attachment will enable us to finalize the review of your request. Should you have any questions concerning this you may contact either Gary Bernath or Martin Brittain by telephone at (214) 743-7675.

Sincerely,

Paul D. Fahrenthold
Chief, Engineering Section
Air Compliance Branch

Attachment

cc: Louisiana Air Control Commission
P. O. Box 60630
New Orleans, Louisiana 70160

bcc: Rich Biondi, DSSE
Susan Wyatt, ESED
6ASA

CA 2-18-77 MEB 2/25/77
6AEA:GASernath/MEBrittain:jeb:X7675:2/25/77

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Items Relating to Waiver Request

Waiver request relating to the six emission points

A. For each emission point that is in need of a waiver, please identify the particular paragraph of the vinyl chloride regulations for which you are requesting a waiver.

B. Please enumerate and identify each of the six emission points. For example, enumerate and identify each EDC vent, each inprocess wastewater stream, and each EDC tank.

Waiver request relating to the fugitive emissions

A. As above for each fugitive emission area, identify the particular paragraph of the regulations for which you are requesting a waiver.

B. Please enumerate and identify each pump, compressor, relief valve, and all equipment in VC service for which a waiver is being requested.

Waiver request relating to emission testing

You have requested a waiver of emission testing (even though you used the term waiver of compliance) for all the VCM emission points regulated by the National Emission Standard for Vinyl Chloride."

This is to inform you that this office will only grant such a testing waiver for those particular processes which have been granted a waiver of compliance. For those sources and processes that you feel are presently in compliance, appropriate testing must be performed at a date which this office will require. If there are any such sources in compliance which require testing, we will talk with you in the near future to set up a testing date.

As to your proposal to conduct the four emission tests in October, 1978, rather than schedule four separate tests between February, 1978, and October, 1978, we are agreeable to such a schedule.

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#4
 March 1, 1977

RECEIVED
 EPA REGION VI
 127 MAR -8 PM 1:46
 ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

Howard G. Bergman
 Director, Enforcement Division
 Region VI, Environmental Protection Agency
 First International Building
 1201 Elm Street
 Dallas, TX 75270

Dear Mr. Bergman:

Methods to comply with EPA's vinyl chloride standard at CONOCO Chemicals' VCM Plant depend on how EPA plans to assure compliance with it. We can imagine several different compliance strategies depending upon which direction EPA moves. Each of these we believe obtains the necessary control but with significantly different costs. To try to obtain efficient emission control for the dollars spent, we would like to compare for you two of these strategies and point out the widely different cost per volume of vinyl chloride controlled. We hope to encourage EPA to adopt a control strategy that lets us install the more cost effective control system.

Our more cost effective strategy envisions installation of one high quality thermal incinerator.

When operating as designed, we believe this unit will keep vinyl chloride emissions well below permissible amounts.

Industry experience teaches us that chemical process equipment, no matter how well constructed or operated, sometimes break down. We expect this to be true with our vinyl chloride incineration train.

Although we are trying to obtain absolute reliability of our control train malfunction we would like to develop an understanding with EPA to continue to produce vinyl chloride and minimize production losses during the control device malfunction. We believe the small additional emission of vinyl chloride above the standard would not cause an unacceptable risk to public health and the environment.

If EPA insisted that we immediately shut down the plant when our vinyl chloride train malfunctioned CONOCO would be forced to avoid the blanket dollars/day... of lost production by installing a standby control system. Only in this fashion could we minimize our losses and comply with the strict interpretation. Installing the dual system we believe represents a grossly disproportionate cost to control the small additional vinyl chloride emission during brief periods of plant operation during the main control device