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Health Department Reaches Agreement with U.S. Steel Corporation

PITTSBURGH – The Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) announced today that on March 24, 2016 it reached an agreement with the United States Steel Corporation (U.S. Steel) regarding numerous violations of both county and federal emission standards at the Clairton Coke Works facility located in the City of Clairton. Leading up to the agreement, U.S. Steel failed to meet various commitments made to the county as part of its ongoing efforts to reduce air polluting emissions. The agreement and the associated complaint were filed yesterday following judicial review in the Fifth Judicial District of Pennsylvania.

“Recognizing that U.S. Steel expends considerable resources to understanding and fixing on-going emission problems at Clairton, the Health Department is now requiring U.S. Steel to employ its engineering expertise towards implementing a solution that will bring its entire facility into compliance in the fastest way possible,” said Jim Thompson, Deputy Director of Environmental Health. “We are confident that with this consent judgment, U.S. Steel will take all necessary steps to bring Clairton Coke Works into compliance with the law. In the event that it is still unable to correct the problem, we have made certain that any continuing violations will be met with significant penalties and consequences.”

After numerous discussions between the Health Department and U.S. Steel, it was decided that judicial intervention and oversight would best serve the parties in resolving the issue of the violations and how U.S. Steel would ultimately come into compliance with mandated emission standards.

Specifically, the Health Department sought to have the Court stop U.S. Steel from operating its Clairton Coke Works facility and any of the offending coke ovens in such a way that its air polluting emissions would violate county and federal laws. In addition to requiring U.S. Steel to fix its offending coke ovens over the next five years, the consent judgment reached requires U.S. Steel to pay the remaining \$25,000 of the \$3,973,000.00 in civil penalties the Health Department has assessed against U.S. Steel since 2009.

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