Merck Coughs up Cash for Clean Air Act Violations

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PHILADELPHIA (Sept. 28, 2011) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Justice today announced that Merck & Co. has agreed to pay a $1.5 million civil penalty to settle alleged violations of federal environmental laws at its pharmaceutical manufacturing facilities in Riverside and West Point, Pa.

The facilities are located at 100 Avenue C, Riverside in Northumberland County and 770 Sumneytown, Pike, West Point in Montgomery County.

According to the United States' complaint, Merck failed to take necessary preventative measures and follow reporting requirements under federal environmental regulations. Because Merck has already resolved the alleged violations, the United States has filed in federal district court a proposed stipulation and order to dismiss the complaint.

The complaint alleges that Merck did not comply with Clean Air Act emissions reporting and recordkeeping requirements. The complaint also asserts that Merck discharged pollutants in excess of limits in its Clean Water Act permit; failed to notify local officials of hazardous substances released; and failed to properly label and store hazardous waste.

The complaint is based on multi-media inspections conducted in 2006 to review both facilities' compliance with federal air, water, hazardous waste, spill prevention, and community right-to-know regulations.

The company has taken corrective actions to correct the alleged violations, and has implemented best management practices for continuing environmental compliance.

SOURCE [1]

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