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(Denver, Colo. – October 12, 2011) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced today that the John Morrell Company has agreed to pay a $206,000 penalty and improve the maintenance of process equipment at its Sioux Falls, S.D., meat packing facility to resolve alleged Clean Air Act violations.

The John Morrell facility in Sioux Falls is subject to risk management regulations because it uses large quantities of anhydrous ammonia. Under the Clean Air Act, facilities that handle hazardous chemicals must develop a risk management program and submit a plan to assist with emergency preparedness, prevent chemical releases, and minimize any releases that do occur. EPA inspectors found that the facility had not adequately implemented these regulations.

“Anhydrous ammonia is acutely toxic and extremely hazardous when released into the air,” said Mike Gaydosh, director of EPA’s enforcement program in Denver. “Failing to establish adequate risk management programs and keep plans updated can increase the risk of accidents and compromise the effectiveness of emergency response actions.”

John Morrell has had several releases of anhydrous ammonia at the Sioux Falls facility in the past, including one in 2004 which resulted in a penalty from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

For more information on the Clean Air Act and risk management requirements: http://www.epa.gov/oem/content/rmp/caa_faqs.htm [1]

SOURCE [2]

SOURCE [3]

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