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ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

IN RE: U.S. SILICA STATE AIR POLLUTION CONTROL
CONSTRUCTION PERMIT.

No. LPI-108

U.S. Silica
Ottawa, Illinois

PUBLIC COMMENT HEARING
HELD ON AUGUST 11, 2015

Central Intermediate School
711 East McKinley Road
Ottawa, Illinois 61350

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I N D E X

WITNESSES:

PAGE:

PATRICK SMELKO

18

TIM BROWN

21

E X H I B I T S

(None were marked.)

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

24

1 (Hearing start time: 7:00 p.m.)

2 MR. STUDER: Good evening. I guess
3 everybody can hear me. Let me back up a little
4 bit here. My name is Dean Studer, and I'm the
5 Hearing Officer for the Illinois Environmental
6 Protection Agency. On behalf of Director Lisa
7 Bonnett I welcome you to tonight's hearing.

8 My purpose tonight is to ensure that
9 this proceeding runs properly according to the
10 rules and is conducted in a fair and efficient
11 manner. Personally, I will not be responding to
12 specific issues raised tonight, but will defer
13 such issues to the technical staff person here
14 with me.

15 This is an informational hearing
16 before the Illinois EPA in the matter of an
17 application for an Air Pollution Control
18 Construction Permit for U.S. Silica for its sand
19 mining and processing facility in Ottawa.

20 This project involves changes to the
21 facility operations to increase the capacity of
22 the facility. The primary elements of this
23 project involve increasing the heat input to one
24 of the sand dryers and installing a new scrubber

1 at this dryer to control particulate matter.
2 Equipment would be added to the wet sand feeds
3 for the other three dryers to apply a wetting
4 agent to the sand. This will increase the amount
5 of water removed by the belt vacuum filters prior
6 to the feed entering the dryers. The existing
7 scrubbers will continue to control emissions from
8 these three sand dryers.

9 This project would not be classified
10 as a major project under Federal Rules for the
11 Prevention of Significant Deterioration,
12 otherwise known as PSD of 40 CFR 52.21. The
13 Illinois EPA is holding this hearing for the
14 purpose of accepting comments from the public on
15 the proposed issuance of the construction permit
16 for this project prior to actually making a final
17 decision on the application.

18 This public hearing is being held
19 under the provisions of the Illinois EPA's
20 Procedures for Permit and Closure Plan hearings,
21 which can be found at 35 Illinois Administrative
22 Code, Part 166, Subpart A. Copies of these
23 procedures can be accessed on the website for the
24 Illinois Pollution Control Board at

1 www.ipcb.state.il.us, Or if you do not have easy
2 access to the internet, copies can be obtained
3 from me upon request. A publication of public
4 hearing means exactly that. It's an opportunity
5 for you to provide information to the Illinois
6 EPA concerning this permit. This is not a
7 contested case hearing.

8 I would like to explain how tonight's
9 hearing is going to proceed. First, I will have
10 the Illinois EPA staff person introduce himself
11 and make opening remarks regarding the project
12 and the draft permit. I will then give more
13 details on how comments will be taken.

14 Mr. Patrick Smelko, Manager of the
15 U.S. Silica plant here in Ottawa, will make a
16 brief opening statement, and this will be
17 followed by comments from the public as they come
18 forward to speak as I call their name.

19 You are not required to provide your
20 comments orally. Written comments are given the
21 same written weight, excuse me. Written comments
22 are given the same consideration and may be
23 submitted to Illinois EPA at any time during the
24 comment period, which ends on September 10th,

1 2015.

2 All comments submitted by mail must be
3 postmarked in sufficient time to arrive at
4 Illinois EPA in Springfield no later than
5 September 10th, 2015. Although we will continue
6 to accept comments through that date, tonight is
7 the only time that we will accept oral comments.
8 The decision date in this matter will depend upon
9 the number and nature of comments received as
10 well as other factors.

11 Any person who wants to make oral
12 comment may do so as long as the statements are
13 relevant to the issues at hand and time allows.
14 If you have not signed a registration card at
15 this point, please see either Jillian Hawkins or
16 Brad Frost at the registration table, and either
17 of them can provide you with a registration card.

18 Please be sure to check the
19 appropriate box on the card if you desire to make
20 comments at the hearing this evening. If you
21 have lengthy comments, please consider providing
22 only a summary of those comments at this hearing
23 and then submitting your comments in their
24 entirety to me in writing before the end of the

1 comment period, and I will ensure that they are
2 included in the hearing record as an exhibit.
3 Again, please keep your comments relevant to the
4 issues at hand. If your comments fall outside
5 the scope of this hearing I may interrupt you and
6 ask you to proceed to your next relevant issue.
7 U.S. Silica is also free to respond to issues if
8 willing to do so, but I am not in a position to
9 require them to do so.

10 Illinois EPA staff will make an
11 attempt to respond to the issues raised, but I
12 will not allow the speakers to argue or to engage
13 in prolonged dialogue with anyone seated at the
14 table or with each other. For the purpose of
15 allowing everyone to have a chance to speak, I
16 ask that we keep our comments to 10 minutes.

17 This should give everyone who desires
18 to speak an opportunity. In addition, I'd like
19 to stress that we want to avoid unnecessary
20 repetition. If anyone before you has already
21 presented information that is contained in your
22 written or oral comments, please skip over those
23 issues when you speak.

24 Once a point is made it makes no

1 difference if the point is made once or whether
2 it is made 99 times. It will be considered on
3 its merit and will be reflected only once in the
4 Responsiveness Summary. The final decision of
5 the Illinois EPA will not be based upon how many
6 people support or oppose the issuance of this
7 permit, but rather upon the record and whether
8 the facility has complied with applicable laws,
9 regulations and requirements for permit issuance.

10 If someone speaking before you has
11 already said what you've desired to say you may
12 pass when I call your name to come forward. All
13 who complete a registration card or submit
14 written comments in this matter will be notified
15 of the final decision in this matter and of the
16 availability of the Responsiveness Summary.

17 In the Responsiveness Summary the
18 Illinois EPA will respond to all significant
19 issues that were raised at this hearing or
20 submitted to me in writing prior to the close of
21 the comment period. And, again, the written
22 record in this matter will close on September
23 10th, 2015.

24 Comments must actually be received by

1 September 10th, 2015. Responses by Illinois EPA
2 staff during this hearing are to be considered
3 preliminary and will be finalized in writing in
4 our Responsiveness Summary. While the record is
5 open, all relevant comments and documents and
6 data will be placed into the hearing record as
7 exhibits. Please send all written documents to
8 my attention.

9 You can send them to Dean Studer,
10 Hearing Officer, Office of Community Relations,
11 Regarding U.S. Silica, Illinois EPA, 1021 North
12 Grand Avenue East, Springfield, Illinois. It's
13 actually a Post Office Box 19276, Springfield,
14 Illinois, 62794-9276.

15 This address is also given on the
16 public notice for this hearing tonight. I remind
17 everyone that we have a court reporter here who's
18 taking a record of these proceedings for the
19 purposes of our administrative record.

20 Once I've received a transcript back
21 from the court reporter I will have it posted on
22 the Agency's web page in the same area where the
23 written, or the hearing notice and other
24 documents in this proceeding have been posted.

1 For the benefit of the court reporter,
2 please keep the general background noise in the
3 room to a minimum so that she can hear everything
4 that is said. Also, please silence all cell
5 phones and pagers at this time if you have not
6 already done so.

7 I now ask Chris Romaine with me to
8 introduce himself and make his opening remarks.

9 MR. ROMAINE: Good evening. My name
10 is Chris Romaine. I am the Manager of the
11 Construction Unit in the Air Permit Section. I
12 would also like to welcome you to tonight's
13 hearing.

14 As has already been mentioned, U.S.
15 Silica has applied for an Air Pollution Control
16 Construction Permit for changes to the sand
17 processing equipment at its facility in Ottawa.
18 This project will increase the production
19 capacity of the facility.

20 I will provide a very brief overview
21 of the facility and the project. As you are all
22 probably aware, at U.S. Silica's Ottawa facility
23 it produces high quality silica sand from
24 sandstone that it mines on-site.

1 requirements that currently apply to the
2 facility. These emission control requirements
3 are accompanied by procedures that U.S. Silica
4 must carry out to assure and confirm compliance
5 with the control requirements, including the
6 requirements for emission testing, inspections,
7 operational monitoring and recordkeeping.

8 The CAAAPP permit for this facility
9 was issued this last January. Since then, U.S.
10 Silica has been working with the Illinois EPA to
11 set up an ambient monitoring station for
12 particulate matter. The proposed project that is
13 the subject of tonight's hearing would involve
14 various changes to increase the production of the
15 facility.

16 The key changes would involve the
17 drying of sand in the sand plant. For one of the
18 four existing dryers the burners could be
19 replaced with dryers about 20 percent larger, and
20 other physical changes would be made to increase
21 the drying capacity. A new high-efficiency
22 scrubber would also be installed on this dryer.

23 For the other three sand dryers
24 changes would be made to increase the amount of

1 water mechanically removed from the wet sand by
2 equipment that is located upstream of the dryers.
3 This will increase the amount of sand that will
4 be dried by these dryers by about ten percent.
5 Particulate emissions of these three dryers will
6 continue to be controlled by the existing
7 high-efficiency scrubbers.

8 Based on past emission testing of the
9 dryers and other process equipment at the sand
10 plant, particulate matter emissions from the
11 process equipment are well controlled and should
12 continue to comply with the applicable emission
13 standards.

14 As addressed in the draft construction
15 permit, further emission testing of the dryers
16 would still be needed following the changes.
17 This testing is required to confirm that the
18 changes were properly made and particulate matter
19 emissions would continue to be in compliance.

20 The construction permit for the
21 proposed project would also set out additional
22 requirements for control of fugitive dust
23 emissions at the facility. For this purpose, the
24 Illinois EPA is still working with U.S. Silica to

1 consideration by the Illinois EPA. Statements
2 and comments that are of a personal nature or
3 reflect on the character or motive of a person or
4 group of people are not appropriate in this
5 hearing. If statements or comments begin to
6 drift into this area or begin to drift away from
7 issues involved with this permit, I may interrupt
8 the person speaking and ask that they proceed to
9 their next relevant issue.

10 As Hearing Officer I intend to treat
11 everyone here tonight in a respectful and
12 professional manner. I ask the members of the
13 panel and the public do the same. If the conduct
14 of the persons attending this hearing should
15 become unruly, I am authorized to adjourn this
16 hearing should the situation warrant.

17 In such a case, the Illinois EPA would
18 still continue to accept written comments through
19 the close of the comment period. You may
20 disagree with or object to some of the statements
21 and comments made tonight. This is a public
22 hearing and everyone has a right to express their
23 comments on this matter.

24 Again, written comments are given the

1 same consideration as oral comments received
2 during this hearing and may be submitted to the
3 Illinois EPA at any time within the public
4 comment period. And, again, the comment period
5 runs through September 10th, 2015. Again,
6 tonight is the only time that we will accept oral
7 comments.

8 When it is your turn to speak I will
9 call your name. Please come forward and state
10 your name and, if applicable, any governmental
11 body, any association or organization that you
12 are representing. If you are not representing a
13 governmental body, an organization, or an
14 association, you may simply indicate that you are
15 a concerned citizen or a member of the public.

16 For the benefit of the court reporter,
17 I ask that you spell your last name. If there
18 are alternate spellings of your first name you
19 may also spell your first name. I ask that while
20 you are speaking you direct your attention to the
21 hearing panel and to the court reporter to ensure
22 that an accurate record of your comments is made.

23 Prolonged dialogue with others here in
24 attendance is not permitted. Comments directed

1 to the public are also not allowed. Again, I
2 remind everyone that the focus of this hearing is
3 the environmental issues associated with the air
4 pollution control construction permit.

5 Are there any questions regarding the
6 procedures that I will use tonight in conducting
7 this hearing? Okay. Let the record indicate
8 that no one raised their hand. With that, I
9 would ask Patrick Smelko to come forward.

10 i also ask that when you speak tonight
11 that you please speak in a slow manner so the
12 court reporter can get down what is said and that
13 you also speak into the mike as your back is
14 toward the people in attendance tonight, and I
15 want to make sure that everyone hears what is
16 actually spoken.

17 MR. SMELKO: Patrick Smelko.

18 S-m-e-l-k-o. Plant Manager, U.S. Silica.

19 MR. STUDER: Is that mic on?

20 MR. SMELKO: Yeah. There it is.

21 MR. STUDER: Okay.

22 MR. SMELKO: I think so. Good

23 evening. My name is Patrick Smelko, and I've

24 been Plant Manager at U.S. Silica's facility

1 since August of 2013. On behalf of U.S. Silica I
2 want to thank you for the opportunity to say a
3 few words about the company and why receiving
4 this permit is so important to our plant and our
5 employees. As part of our operations we
6 requested IEPA to issue a construction permit.
7 I'd also like to take a minute to talk about the
8 facility.

9 As many of you know, our plant in
10 Ottawa has been part of the community for more
11 than 100 years. U.S. Silica employs over 170
12 employees, and we're proud of the strong
13 partnership we have with the Steel Workers'
14 Union. We see ourselves, however, as more than
15 just an employer.

16 We continue to invest in our facility
17 and the community. For example, we recently
18 completed the 30 million equipment and facility
19 investment that expanded our operations and added
20 nearly 50 new jobs.

21 In addition, the facility indirectly
22 supports many more jobs, including but not
23 limited to the contractors, suppliers, truck
24 drivers, and railroad workers. Over the years

1 we've also worked directly with many people and
2 organizations that are the foundation community,
3 and we appreciate the opportunity to make a
4 difference by supporting their important work.
5 Our commitment to being a sustainable company
6 extends not only to local investments, but our
7 work to ensure safe and responsible operations.

8 Over 40 percent of the wage generated
9 at the facility, including plastic, metal, glass
10 and wood, is recycled, and that number is
11 growing. Our eventual goal is 90 percent.

12 Like everyone in the room, we care
13 very much about air quality. That's why we're
14 here today. The air quality for our workers and
15 for our neighbors is the utmost importance to us.
16 We work to ensure the quality of air in our work
17 place and our community in a number of ways.

18 The trucks that leave our facility are
19 covered. Our processing equipment is enclosed.
20 The air emissions of monitoring and reporting is
21 done regularly to ensure compliance. We have a
22 strong fugitive dust program. This includes two
23 water trucks with 2000-gallon tanks each in order
24 to wet the roads.

1 In addition, I'm happy to announce
2 we've recently entered into a voluntary agreement
3 with the Illinois EPA to install a PM tent air
4 monitor at our facility, which should be
5 operational by the spring of 2016.

6 Finally, I'd like to address permit
7 compliance, something that U.S. Silica, and the
8 Ottawa plant in particular, have a strong track
9 record for. As a sand mining company, we're
10 required to adhere to many different kinds of
11 permits, which we do with diligence.

12 Compliance is a team effort, and I
13 want to take the opportunity to recognize the
14 U.S. Silica employees whose attention to detail
15 keeps everyone safe. In April of 2015 we
16 received a clean air inspection from the IEPA,
17 and we have every intention of maintaining that
18 track record.

19 In closing, I want to thank you again
20 for the opportunity to be here. Receiving this
21 permit is an important part of our operations and
22 we hope the IEPA will issue it. Thank you.

23 MR. STUDER: Thank you, Mr. Smelko.
24 Tim Brown.

1 MR. BROWN: I am Tim Brown, Vice
2 President of Local 31G with the United
3 Steelworkers. I've been a U.S. Silica --

4 MR. STUDER: Mr. Brown, can you try
5 and project your voice into the mic?

6 MR. BROWN: I'm sorry.

7 MR. STUDER: That's okay.

8 MR. BROWN: I've been a U.S. Silica
9 employee for 18 years. Previous to that and for
10 six years I hauled the sand into the production
11 facility at Pilkington Mines. I've been around
12 this facility for 23 years. I've been --

13 MR. STUDER: You're drifting.

14 MR. BROWN: I'm sorry. I've been
15 involved or participated in four dryer changes at
16 this point. There's never been an excessive
17 amount of particulates, airborne, through any
18 dryer changes.

19 So with our employee base now, we're
20 pretty much worried about our safety in the plant
21 when it's concerning the situation that our
22 number three dryers are.

23 I don't think this is so much as an
24 increase in production goal here, it's more of a

1 safety goal and a requirement that we have to
2 address. And it's for the safety of our
3 employees as much as it is for production.
4 That's all I've got. Thank you.

5 MR. STUDER: Thank you, Mr. Brown. It
6 looks like that's anybody that's registered to
7 speak tonight. Is there someone in the room
8 tonight that would like to make a comment on the
9 record while it is open?

10 (No response.)

11 MR. STUDER: Okay. Let the record
12 indicate that no one raised their hand. With
13 that, I remind everyone that the written record
14 in this will be open until the 10th of September.
15 Written comments need to be postmarked in
16 sufficient time to ensure that they arrive at EPA
17 headquarters in Springfield by September 10th.
18 With that, this hearing is adjourned. I thank
19 you for your attendance tonight.

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21 (Hearing concluded at 7:30 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, Kathy L. Johnson, a Certified Court Reporter within and for the State of Illinois, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the testimony of all witnesses in the foregoing hearing were duly sworn to testify to the truth and nothing but the truth; that the testimony of said witnesses was taken by stenographic means by me to the best of my ability and thereafter reduced to print under my direction.

I further certify that I am neither attorney nor counsel for, nor related, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this deposition was taken; further, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, or financially interested in this action.

Kathy Johnson
Lic. No.: 084-003071

PUBLIC COMMENT HEARING 8/11/2015

A	<p>22:17 announce 21:1 anybody 23:6 apologize 15:18 applause 15:20 applicable 9:8 14:12 17:10 application 4:17 5:17 applied 11:15 apply 5:3 13:1 appreciate 20:3 appropriate 7:19 15:1,21 16:4 appropriately 15:12 April 21:15 area 10:22 12:3 16:6 argue 8:12 arrive 7:3 23:16 associated 18:3 association 17:11 17:14 assure 13:4 attempt 8:11 attendance 15:20 17:24 18:14 23:19 attending 15:14 16:14 attention 10:8 17:20 21:14 attorney 24:13 24:16 August 1:13 19:1 authorized 16:15 availability 9:16 Avenue 3:5,10 10:12 avoid 8:19 aware 11:22</p>	<p>background 11:2 13:20,24 14:16 14:18 22:15,18 baghouses 12:12 base 22:19 based 9:5 14:8 behalf 4:6 19:1 belt 5:5 benefit 11:1 17:16 best 24:9 bit 4:4 Board 5:24 body 17:11,13 Bonnett 4:7 box 3:6,11 7:19 10:13 Brad 3:15 7:16 brief 6:16 11:20 Brown 2:7 21:24 22:1,1,4,6,8,14 23:5 burners 13:18</p>	<p>13:20,24 14:16 14:18 22:15,18 character 16:3 check 7:18 Chris 11:7,10 15:16 CHRISTOPH... 3:10 citizen 17:15 classified 5:9 clean 12:17,22 21:16 close 9:20,22 16:19 closing 21:19 Closure 5:20 Code 5:22 come 6:17 9:12 17:9 18:9 comment 1:12 6:24 7:12 8:1 9:21 16:19 17:4 17:4 23:8 comments 5:14 6:13,17,20,20 6:21 7:2,6,7,9 7:20,21,22,23 8:3,4,16,22 9:14,24 10:5 15:15,23 16:2,5 16:18,21,23,24 17:1,7,22,24 23:15 commitment 20:5 community 10:10 19:10,17 20:2,17 company 19:3 20:5 21:9 complete 9:13 completed 19:18 compliance 13:4 14:19 20:21 21:7,12 complied 9:8 comply 14:12</p>	<p>concerned 17:15 concerning 6:6 22:21 concerns 15:19 concluded 23:21 conduct 16:13 conducted 4:10 conducting 18:6 confirm 13:4 14:17 consider 7:21 consideration 6:22 16:1 17:1 considered 9:2 10:2 construction 1:4 3:12 4:18 5:15 11:11,16 14:14 14:20 15:4 18:4 19:6 contained 8:21 contested 6:7 continue 5:7 7:5 14:6,12,19 15:4 16:18 19:16 contractors 19:23 control 1:3 4:17 5:1,7,24 11:15 12:11,13,19,24 13:2,5 14:22 15:1,5 18:4 controlled 14:6 14:11 controls 15:12 copies 5:22 6:2 counsel 24:13,17 course 15:22 court 3:20 10:17 10:21 11:1 17:16,21 18:12 24:3 covered 20:19 current 12:16 currently 13:1</p>
	B			
	<p>B 2:10 back 4:3 10:20 18:13</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">C</p> <p>C 3:1 CAAAPP 12:19 12:23 13:8 15:3 CAAPP 12:18 call 6:18 9:12 17:9 capacity 4:21 11:19 13:21 card 7:14,17,19 9:13 care 20:12 carry 13:4 case 6:7 16:17 cell 11:4 Central 1:16 certain 12:21 CERTIFICATE 2:16 24:1 Certified 24:3 certify 24:5,12 CFR 5:12 chance 8:15 changes 4:20 11:16 13:14,16</p>		
			D	

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