

[Press Releases](#)

September 2, 2011

ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN: PILSEN COPPER PLANT TO REDUCE HARMFUL LEAD EMISSIONS

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan has filed a complaint against H. Kramer & Co. over dangerous levels of lead emissions from its copper smelter in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood. Today, Attorney General Madigan obtained an agreed preliminary injunction order against the company, requiring it to immediately reduce lead emissions from its plant.

Madigan's three-count complaint, filed in Cook County Circuit Court, alleges the H. Kramer plant, 1345 W. 21st St., created a substantial danger to the environment and the public, including nearby schoolchildren. The action is based on a referral from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency showing the facility's lead emissions from April 2010 exceeded federal air quality standards. Emission levels were discovered by air monitors installed by IEPA officials in and around the facility, including at the Manuel Perez Jr. Elementary School and Benito Juarez Community Academy.

"The emissions coming from the H. Kramer facility pose serious health risks to the surrounding community," Attorney General Madigan said. "Today's agreement requires H. Kramer officials to make immediate changes to reduce harmful pollution levels. My office will continue to work with state and federal environmental authorities to protect the community's health and safety."

Madigan's complaint asks the court to order H. Kramer to immediately investigate the cause of the excess emissions and take immediate action to reduce emissions to comply with statutory and regulatory standards. It also asks the court to require H. Kramer to pay civil penalties and all costs associated with the Attorney General's prosecution.

The agreed preliminary injunction entered today will require H. Kramer to:

- Replace existing pollution control technology serving the rotary furnaces in the south foundry building with state-of-the-art technology;
- Hire an outside engineering expert to conduct a ventilation study of the south foundry building;
- Continue to reduce lead-containing production processes;
- Remediate the lead-contaminated gravels at the facility by year's end; and
- Meet with Madigan's office and state and federal environmental authorities within 10 days to discuss a proposal by H. Kramer to install state-of-the-art pollution control technology.

H. Kramer has already implemented the following steps as a result of meetings with Madigan's office and state and federal environmental authorities, including:

- Reduced lead-containing production processes at the facility;
- Eliminated the stack located in the southwest corner of the facility;
- Repaired and sealed all significant openings or holes in the roof to maintain negative pressure and minimize uncontrolled emissions from the building;
- Installed high-speed vertical doors, including on the two entrances to the south foundry building, to maintain negative pressure and minimize uncontrolled emissions from the building; and
- Applied dust suppressants on the facility's gravel yard to prevent lead-contaminated dust from being blown into the air.

Madigan said her office and state and federal environmental authorities have previously met with community organizations to discuss their concerns over the danger being posed to residents in the Pilsen community. Included in those discussions were the Pilsen Environmental Rights and Reform Organization and the Pilsen Alliance.

Environmental Bureau Chief RoseMarie Cazeau, Supervising Attorney Rebecca Burlingham and Assistant Attorney General Krystyna Bednarczyk are handling this case for Madigan's Environmental Bureau.

[Return to September 2011 Press Releases](#)

