



December 31, 2013

---

**MADIGAN: BLUE ISLAND PHENOL PRODUCTION UNIT OFFLINE UNTIL INVESTIGATION INTO EXPLOSION AND FIRE COMPLETED**

*Agreed Injunction Order Requires Company to Address Structural Failings*

**Chicago** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced that a manufacturing unit damaged in an explosion earlier this month at Blue Island Phenol will remain offline until the cause of the incident is determined and the company addresses any systematic failings.

A Cook County judge today granted Madigan's motion for a preliminary injunction ordering the company to investigate the cause of the incident and submit findings to the Attorney General's office and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA).

The case stems from a blast on Dec. 13, which injured two employees and caused the evacuation of the facility at 3350 W. 131st St. in Alsip.

"Our highest priority is to identify the cause of this incident and make sure the root of the problem is fully addressed," said Madigan. "This company is a repeat offender of the state's environmental protection laws, so we are monitoring this situation extremely closely."

"This is a good first step to ensure that the cause and impact of this incident is determined before these operations continue," said IEPA Director Lisa Bonnett. "Gov. Quinn and IEPA are committed to protecting the environment and the health of everyone who lives near this facility."

The agreed injunction order requires Blue Island Phenol LLC to employ an Illinois-licensed engineer to submit a comprehensive list of needed repairs and structural modifications to the damaged chemical production unit. Further, it requires the unit to remain offline until all repairs have been made. The company also must:

- inventory the chemicals remaining in the damaged unit,
- investigate the extent of soil and groundwater contamination caused by runoff from water used to extinguish the fire,
- cordon off areas where asbestos-containing material affected by the incident is located, and
- ensure that a licensed abatement contractor properly disposes of the asbestos-containing material.

Madigan's office filed an initial complaint late Friday alleging air and water pollution violations as a result of the explosion. The complaint also alleges Blue Island Phenol failed to minimize the effects caused by the release of hazardous substances during the fire. Each count seeks the statutory maximum penalty of \$50,000 per violation and \$10,000 for each day each violation continues.

In 2008, Madigan's office filed [suit](#) against Blue Island Phenol following a chemical release and fire that the company claimed was precipitated by a lightning strike and power outage. A consent order was entered on January 14, 2011. Blue Island Phenol is still completing some of the work required under that order.

Judge Sophia H. Hall set Feb. 18, 2014, for a status hearing on the case. Assistant Attorneys General Stephen Sylvester and Sammy David are handling the case for Madigan's Environmental Bureau.

