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November 3, 2017

ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN, DUPAGE COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY FILE LAWSUIT AGAINST SUBURBAN GAS STATION OVER LEAK, EXPLOSIONS***Madigan Asks Court to Ensure Gas Station Remains Closed, Cleanup Work Continues***

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan and DuPage County State's Attorney Robert B. Berlin today filed a lawsuit against Speedway LLC over a gasoline leak at one of the company's DuPage County gas stations that resulted in an explosion at a condominium complex and several additional explosions in the nearby community.

Madigan and Berlin filed the complaint and motion for immediate and preliminary injunction in DuPage County Circuit Court against Speedway, which operates a Speedway Gas Station located at 6241 S. Cass Ave. in Westmont, Ill. Madigan and Berlin are asking the court to require that Speedway remain closed, perform air monitoring at any affected homes in and around the sanitary sewer system and investigate and address any contamination from the gasoline release.

The Speedway station includes six underground storage tanks, four of which are 10,000-gallon gasoline tanks that are located adjacent to a county sanitary sewer system. According to Madigan's and Berlin's complaint, Speedway officials identified signs of a potential leak in October.

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency referred the case to the Attorney General's Office for prosecution after an Oct. 20 explosion at the Knoll Condominiums just over a mile away from the station resulted in injury to a resident. All 150 units had to be evacuated. A total of 10 explosions occurred in nearby residential buildings and along the sewer line that injured at least three people. In addition to the evacuation at the Knoll Condominiums, approximately six other homes were evacuated. Additionally, pressure from gasoline vapors in the sanitary sewer system caused 14 manhole covers along the sewer line to be blown off.

"The explosions due to gasoline leaks at the Speedway station caused significant damage and disruption to people in the community," Madigan said. "Today's complaint and injunction requires Speedway to remain closed until it can assure the state that it has cleaned up, determined and remedied the causes, and can ensure the safety of its operations."

Gasoline is highly flammable and can migrate through soil and sewer systems into basements, crawl space cracks and pipes to create inhalation and explosion hazards. Officials believe the Knoll Condominiums explosion was the result of gasoline vapors being ignited by a laundry dryer. Residents of 12 units are still under evacuation orders that could last for months.

Following the explosions, Speedway emptied the leaking storage tank and removed the affected tank and remaining underground storage tanks. In the complaint, Madigan and Berlin ask the court to require Speedway to take steps to control any gasoline released at the site and to continue working to evaluate and remediate any soil or groundwater contamination. The lawsuit also asks for civil penalties.

Assistant Attorneys General Gerald Karr, Angad Nagra and Ellen O'Laughlin are handling the case for Madigan's Environmental Bureau.

Assistant State's Attorney Lisa Smith is handling the case for the DuPage County State's Attorney.

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