

Gillispie, Mitchell, Watson, et al, to Robert G. Burnley, Director, Virginia DEQ
January 5, 2005
Enclosure: Videotape

Videotape Summary – Columbia Forest Products, Chatham

Variety of Days, Times, Conditions

The enclosed videotape shows smoke from the boiler stack at Columbia Forest Products, Chatham, Virginia. The segments illustrate conditions at the plant and in the surrounding neighborhood during **different days of the week, times of day, seasons, and atmospheric conditions.**

Incomplete Combustion, Dangerous By-Products

The scenes show **thick, heavy smoke resulting from incomplete combustion.** The smells associated with the smoke are unpleasant, and include similarities to burning tires, rotting fish, and chicken manure. The smoke is often quite irritating to the respiratory system. We believe, as expressed in the enclosed correspondence, that such incomplete combustion is a **very dangerous** situation to the neighborhood, given the plastics (urea-formaldehyde and polyurethane resins, and acrylic stains and finishes) being burned in the boiler and that the byproducts of their incomplete burning include **hydrogen cyanide, isocyanates, carbon monoxide, acrolein, formaldehyde, ammonia,** etc.

High Quantities of Emissions

The plant's **air permit** provides a limit of 24.6 tons of particulate matter (12.3 tons PM, 12.3 tons PM 10) of emissions from the stack per year (1B-23), which, it appears to us from the heavy smoke as well as residues, is likely being **vastly exceeded.** Only 16.08 tons (8.04 tons PM, 8.04 tons PM 10) were reported as actually emitted in 2003 (1B-23).

Long Hours of Emissions

Additionally, recent boiler emission reports are based on the **assumption** of 6400 hours (267 days) of operation per year(1B-23), apparently indicating that the **boiler would have no emissions on most Saturdays and Sundays.** DEQ Inspector Craig Nicol's Air Inspection Report of 1/6/2004 describes the operation as "24 hours a day 5 days a week with the boiler being placed in an idle state over weekends" (1A-03). Our experience (examples are included below) is that **emissions are quite heavy on many Saturdays and Sundays.**

See contents of videotape footage (next page).

Sunday, December 26, 2004

1. 00:00 – 00:55 4:52 p.m. Boiler stack has high, dark plume.

Sunday, December 19, 2004

2. 00:55 – 04:38 12:15 p.m. Smoke rolling from plant across neighborhood.
3. 04:38 – 06:50 12:30 p.m. Heavy smoke from the stack (cause of previous display).

Sunday, December 5, 2004

4. 06:50 – 08:11 1:08 p.m. Heavy smoke from stack fills immediate area.
5. 08:11 – 09:20 3:00 p.m. Smoke drops to ground as it leaves stack.

Sunday, November 21, 2004

6. 09:20 – 10:09 11:30 a.m. Smoke fills immediate area.
7. 10:09 – 11:18 1:25 p.m. Smokes moves in Rison Street neighborhood.
8. 11:18 – 13:29 1:29 p.m. Another view of the boiler stack.

Sunday, November 14, 2004

9. 13:29 – 14:29 5:15 p.m. Boiler stack with black plume.

Saturday, November 13, 2004

10. 14:29 – 15:03 9:37 a.m. Boiler stack with heavy smoke.

Friday, October 15, 2004

11. 15:03 – 16:10 12:23 p.m. Boiler stack with heavy smoke.

Wednesday, August 18, 2004

12. 16:10 – 17:35 9:57 a.m. Boiler stack with heavy smoke.

Tuesday, July 27, 2004

13. 17:35 – 18:52 9:10 a.m. Smoke in low ground of Courthouse Spring valley between Whittle and Depot Streets.
14. 18:52 – 20:20 9:20 a.m. Smoke at the end of Whittle Street.
15. 20:20 – 21:17 9:25 a.m. Boiler stack with smoke.

Thursday, July 22, 2004

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| 16. | 21:17 – 21:45 | 12:55 p.m. | Boiler stack with billowing smoke. |
| 17. | 21:45 – 24:35 | 1:06 p.m. | Billowing smoke as seen from location of DEQ monitoring equipment on nearby hillside. |

Saturday, July 10, 2004

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| 18. | 24:35 – 26:08 | 5:00 p.m. | Smoke from boiler stack. |
| 19. | 26:08 – 27:15 | 8:05 p.m. | After rainfall, smoke in neighborhood. |
| 20. | 27:15 – 27:57 | 8:10 p.m. | Smoke in White's Branch valley. |
| 21. | 27:57 – 28:28 | 8:10 p.m. | Smoke from boiler stack. |

Friday, July 9, 2004

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| 22. | 28:28 – 28:58 | 8:30 p.m. | Boiler stack with high plume. |
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Wednesday, July 7, 2004

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| 23. | 28:58 – 29:14 | 2:43 p.m. | Smoke from boiler stack. |
| 24. | 29:14 – 30:10 | 2:45 p.m. | Smoke fills yard at end of Whittle Street. |

Monday, June 14, 2004

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| 25. | 30:10 – 31:26 | 6:50 p.m. | Smoke from boiler stack. |
| 26. | 31:26 – 33:52 | 8:30 p.m. | During rain, emissions roll through neighborhood. |

Monday, May 17, 2004

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| 27. | 33:52 – 34:22 | 9:15 a.m. | Smoke from boiler stack |
| 28. | 34:22 – 35:14 | 9:20 a.m. | Smoke visible in Whittle Street and White's Branch valley area, with comments by Charles Tackett, Ft. Worth, Texas. |

Sunday, December 26, 2004

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| 29. | 35:14 – 36:25 | 10:45 p.m. | Under dark conditions, intermitted high arching plumes of stack emissions are visible. (Low, light puffs are steam.) |
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Sunday, December 19, 2004

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| 30. | 36:25 – 45:15 | 12:30 p.m. | Nine-minute stack emissions sequence from which the #3 excerpt above was taken. |
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