



THE UNITED STATES
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United States Attorney's Office
District of Oregon

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**Company Operating Aluminum Processing Facility in The Dalles Charged
with Clean Air Act Violations**

PORTLAND, Ore.—An Illinois-based company that operates an aluminum processing facility in The Dalles, Oregon has been charged with violating the Clean Air Act by negligently releasing a hazardous air pollutant from its facility, endangering employees and nearby community members.

Hydro Extrusion USA (Hydro), a limited liability corporation based in Rosemont, Illinois, has been charged by criminal information with negligent endangerment under the Clean Air Act.

“Enforcing emissions standards for hazardous air pollutants is critical to protecting the air we breathe and ensuring companies play by the rules,” said Ethan Knight, Chief of the Economic Crimes Unit for the U.S. Attorney’s Office. “We will vigorously prosecute any company that risks the health and safety of its workers or our communities.”

“Our nation’s environmental laws are designed to protect our communities from hazardous pollutants,” said Special Agent in Charge Scot Adair of the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) criminal investigation program in Oregon. “The criminal charge filed in this case demonstrates that companies that negligently violate those laws will be held responsible for their crimes.”

According to court documents, Hydro operates a secondary aluminum processing facility in The Dalles where it melts aluminum scrap in induction furnaces to produce reusable aluminum billets. While operating, air emissions from the company’s furnaces were open to the interior of the building and did not pass through any pollution control devices before reaching employees or being vented to ambient air.

Under the Clean Air Act, secondary aluminum production facilities are only permitted to use “clean charge,” aluminum scrap free of paints, coatings or lubricants. Despite this requirement, from July 2018 through June 2019, Hydro acquired and melted scrap aluminum coated in a mineral-oil based mixture that, when combusted, produced hazardous smoke. During this time, Hydro employees noticed excessive smoke in the facility. Despite being notified by inspectors from EPA and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (Oregon DEQ), Hydro continued melting the unclean charge.

Hydro has fully cooperated with the government’s investigation of this matter and agreed to plead guilty.

This case was investigated by the EPA Criminal Investigation Division (EPA-CID) with assistance from Oregon DEQ. It is being prosecuted by Ryan W. Bounds, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon.

A criminal information is only an accusation of a crime, and a defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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