

UNITED STATES
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 6
DALLAS, TEXAS

FILED
2015 AUG 20 11 09 15
L. J. COOPER, JR., CLERK
EPA REGION 6

IN THE MATTER OF:

US PLATING LP
IRVING, TEXAS

RESPONDENT

§
§
§
§
§
§
§
§
§
§

DOCKET NO. EPCRA-06-2015-0509

CONSENT AGREEMENT AND FINAL ORDER

The Director, Multimedia Planning and Permitting Division, United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 6 (Complainant), and US Plating LP (Respondent), in the above-referenced proceeding, hereby agree to resolve this matter through the issuance of this Consent Agreement and Final Order (CAFO).

I. PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

1. This proceeding for the assessment of civil penalties pursuant to Section 325(c) of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), 42 U.S.C. § 11045(c), is simultaneously commenced and concluded by the issuance of this CAFO against Respondent pursuant to 40 C.F.R. §§ 22.13(b) and 22.18(b)(2) and (3).

2. For the purposes of this proceeding, Respondent admits the jurisdictional allegations herein; however, Respondent neither admits nor denies the specific factual allegations and conclusions of law contained in this CAFO.

3. Respondent explicitly waives any right to contest the factual allegations or conclusions of law contained in this CAFO, as well as its right to appeal the Final Order set forth

herein, and waives all defenses which have been raised or could have been raised to the claims set forth in the CAFO.

4. EPA and Respondent agree that the settlement of the relevant matters without litigation will save time and resources, that it is in the public's interest, and that the entry of this CAFO is the most appropriate means of resolving such matters. This CAFO only resolves the causes of action alleged in this CAFO.

5. Respondent consents to the issuance of this CAFO and to the assessment and payment of the stated civil penalty in the amount and by the method set forth in this CAFO.

6. Respondent represents that it is duly authorized to execute this CAFO and that the party signing this CAFO on behalf of Respondent is duly authorized to bind Respondent to the terms and conditions of this CAFO.

7. Respondent agrees that the provisions of this CAFO shall be binding on its officers, directors, employees, agents, servants, authorized representatives, successors, and assigns.

8. Respondent hereby certifies that as of the date of the execution of this CAFO, US Plating LP has corrected the violations alleged in this CAFO, and is now, to the best of its knowledge, in compliance with all applicable requirements of Section 313 of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11023, and 40 C.F.R. Part 372.

II. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY BACKGROUND

9. Section 313 of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11023, and 40 C.F.R. §§ 372.22 and 372.30 require the owner or operator of a facility that (a) has ten or more full-time employees; (b) is an establishment with a primary Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) major group or industry

code listed in 40 C.F.R. § 372.23(a), or a primary North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) subsector or industry code listed in 40 C.F.R. §§ 372.23(b) or (c); and (c) “manufactured, processed, or otherwise used” a toxic chemical listed under Subsection 313(c) of EPCRA and 40 C.F.R. § 372.65, in excess of the threshold quantity established under Subsection 313(f) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11023(f), and 40 C.F.R. §§ 372.25, 372.27, or 372.28 during the calendar year, shall complete and submit a toxic chemical release form to the Administrator of EPA and to the State in which the subject facility is located by July 1 of the following year, for each toxic chemical known by the owner or operator to be “manufactured, processed, or otherwise used” in quantities exceeding the established threshold quantity during that preceding calendar year.

10. According to Section 313(f) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11023(f), and 40 C.F.R. § 372.25, the threshold amount for reporting under Section 313(b) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11023(b), and 40 C.F.R. § 372.30, is 25,000 pounds for any toxic chemical “manufactured or processed,” and 10,000 pounds for any toxic chemical “otherwise used” for the applicable calendar year. Alternative reporting thresholds are set forth in 40 C.F.R. §§ 372.27 and 372.28.

III. FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

A. PRELIMINARY ALLEGATIONS

11. Respondent is incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas and is authorized to do business in the State of Texas.

12. Respondent is a “person” as defined by Section 329(7) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11049(7).

13. Respondent owns and operates a facility at 2215 Century Circle, Irving, Texas, 75062.

14. Respondent owns and operates a “facility”, as that term is defined by Section 329(4) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11049(4), and 40 C.F.R. § 372.3.

15. Respondent's facility has ten (10) or more “full-time employees” as that term is defined by 40 C.F.R. § 372.3.

16. Respondent's facility is in NAICS subsector or industry code 332813 (electroplating, plating, polishing, anodizing, & coloring).

17. The chemical nickel is a “toxic chemical” within the meaning of 40 C.F.R. §§ 372.3 and 372.65.

18. During the 2010, 2011, and 2012 calendar years, nickel was “manufactured”, “processed”, and/or “otherwise used” as those terms are defined by 40 C.F.R. § 372.3, at the Respondent's facility. As such, Respondent is subject to the regulatory and statutory provisions cited herein.

19. On August 26, 2014, an inspection of Respondent's facility covering the 2009 through 2013 calendar years was conducted by a duly authorized representative of EPA, where the violations alleged below were discovered.

B. VIOLATIONS

Count One – Data Quality Error for Nickel for the 2010 Calendar Year

20. During the 2010 calendar year, Respondent processed nickel at the Respondent's facility in excess of the applicable threshold quantity.

21. Respondent filed a Form R for the identified toxic chemical that contained incorrect amounts of releases.

22. Therefore, Respondent violated Section 313(a) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11023(a), and 40 C.F.R. § 372.30 by failing to submit a form that contained the correct amount of nickel released for the 2010 calendar year to the EPA and to the State of Texas by the applicable due date.

Count Two - Data Quality Error for Nickel for the 2011 Calendar Year

23. During the 2011 calendar year, Respondent processed nickel at the Respondent's facility in excess of the applicable threshold quantity.

24. Respondent filed a Form R for the identified toxic chemical that contained incorrect amounts of releases.

25. Therefore, Respondent violated Section 313(a) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11023(a), and 40 C.F.R. § 372.30 by failing to submit a form that contained the correct amount of nickel released for the 2011 calendar year to the EPA and to the State of Texas by the applicable due date.

Count Three - Data Quality Error for Nickel for the 2012 Calendar Year

26. During the 2012 calendar year, Respondent processed nickel at the Respondent's facility in excess of the applicable threshold quantity.

27. Respondent filed a Form R for the identified toxic chemical that contained incorrect amounts of releases.

28. Therefore, Respondent violated Section 313(a) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11023(a), and 40 C.F.R. § 372.30 by failing to submit a form that contained the correct amount of nickel released for the 2012 calendar year to the EPA and to the State of Texas by the applicable due date.

IV. TERMS OF SETTLEMENT

A. CIVIL PENALTY

29. For the reasons set forth above, Respondent has agreed to pay a civil penalty which has been determined in accordance with Section 325(c) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11045(c)¹. Upon consideration of the entire record herein, including the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, which are hereby adopted and made a part hereof, and upon consideration of the nature, circumstances, extent and gravity of the alleged violations, and with respect to Respondent, ability to pay, lack of prior EPCRA Section 313 violations, the degree of culpability, economic benefit or savings (if any) resulting from the violations, cooperation, institution of corrective actions, and other factors as justice may require, it is **ORDERED** that Respondent be assessed a civil penalty of **Three-Thousand, Two-Hundred Dollars (\$3,200.00)**, which will settle the violations as alleged herein.

30. Within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this CAFO, Respondent shall pay the first of four (4) quarterly installments of \$800.00, or twenty-five percent (25%) of the fully-

¹ The amount of penalty that can be assessed under Section 325(c) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11045(c) was increased by the Civil Monetary Penalty Inflation Adjustment Rule codified at 40 C.F.R. Part 19 to \$27,500 per day of violation, for violations occurring between January 30, 1997 and March 15, 2004; and \$32,500 per day of violation for violations which occurred between March 15, 2004 and January 12, 2009; and to \$37,500 per day of violation for violations which occurred after January 12, 2009.

In the Matter of US Plating LP; Docket No. EPCRA-06-2015-0509

assessed civil penalty of \$3,200.00, by certified check, cashier's check, or wire transfer, made payable to "Treasurer, United States of America, EPA - Region 6". Payment shall be remitted in one of three (3) ways: regular U.S. Postal Service mail (including certified mail), overnight mail, or wire transfer. For regular U.S. Postal Service mail, U.S. Postal Service certified mail, or U.S. Postal Service express mail, the check(s) should be remitted to:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Fines and Penalties
Cincinnati Finance Center
P.O. Box 979077
St. Louis, MO 63197-9000

For overnight mail (non-U.S. Postal Service, e.g. Fed Ex), the check(s) should be remitted to:

U.S. Bank
Government Lockbox 979077
US EPA Fines & Penalties
1005 Convention Plaza
SL-MO-C2-GL
St. Louis, MO 63101
Phone No. (314) 418-1028

For wire transfer, the payment should be remitted to:

Federal Reserve Bank of New York
ABA = 021030004
Account = 68010727
SWIFT address = FRNYUS33
33 Liberty Street
New York, NY 10045

Field Tag 4200 of the Fedwire message should read "D 68010727 Environmental Protection Agency"

PLEASE NOTE: Docket number EPCRA-06-2015-0509 shall be clearly typed on the check, or other method of payment, to ensure proper credit. If payment is made by check, the check shall also be accompanied by a transmittal letter and shall reference Respondent's name and address, the case name, and docket number of the CAFO. If payment is made by wire transfer, the wire transfer instructions shall reference Respondent's name and address, the case name, and docket number of the CAFO. Respondent shall also send a simultaneous notice of such payment, including a copy of the check and transmittal letter, or wire transfer instructions to the following:

David Riley
EPCRA 313 Enforcement Officer
Toxics Section (6PD-T)
U.S. EPA, Region 6
1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200
Dallas, TX 75202-2733

Lorena Vaughn
Regional Hearing Clerk (6RC-D)
U.S. EPA, Region 6
1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200
Dallas, TX 75202-2733

Respondent's adherence to this request will ensure proper credit is given when penalties are received by EPA and acknowledged in the Region. The schedule of payments is as follows:

DUE DATE	INSTALLMENT	PAYMENT	TOTAL PAID
September 25, 2015	1st (initial)	\$800	\$800
December 25, 2015	2nd	\$800	\$1,600
March 25, 2016	3rd	\$800	\$2,400
June 25, 2016	4th	\$800	\$3,200

31. The Respondent agrees not to claim or attempt to claim a federal income tax deduction or credit covering all or any part of the civil penalty paid to the United States Treasurer.

32. If Respondent fails to submit payment within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this Order, Respondent may be subject to a civil action pursuant to Section 325(f) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11045(f), to collect any unpaid portion of the assessed penalty, together with interest, handling charges and nonpayment penalties as set forth below.

33. Pursuant to 31 U.S.C. § 3717 and 40 C.F.R. § 13.11, unless otherwise prohibited by law, EPA will assess interest and late payment penalties on outstanding debts owed to the United States and a charge to cover the costs of processing and handling a delinquent claim. Interest on the civil penalty assessed in this CAFO will begin to accrue thirty (30) days after the effective date of the CAFO and will be recovered by EPA on any amount of the civil penalty that is not paid by the respective due date. Interest will be assessed at the rate of the United States Treasury tax and loan rate in accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 13.11(a). Moreover, the costs of the Agency's administrative handling of overdue debts will be charged and assessed monthly throughout the period the debt is overdue. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 13.11(b).

34. EPA will also assess a fifteen dollar (\$15.00) administrative handling charge for administrative costs on unpaid penalties for the first thirty (30) day period after the payment is due and an additional fifteen dollar (\$15.00) for each subsequent thirty (30) day period that the penalty remains unpaid. In addition, a penalty charge of up to six percent (6%) per year will be assessed monthly on any portion of the debt which remains delinquent more than ninety (90)

days. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 13.11(c). Should a penalty charge on the debt be required, it shall accrue from the first day payment is delinquent. *See* 31 C.F.R. § 901.9(d). Other penalties for failure to make a payment may also apply.

35. This document is a "Final Order" as that term is defined in the "Enforcement Response Policy for Section 313 of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (1986) and Section 6607 of the Pollution Prevention Act (1990)," dated August 10, 1992; Amended, April 12, 2001; for the purpose of demonstrating a history of "prior such violations".

B. RETENTION OF ENFORCEMENT RIGHTS

36. EPA does not waive any rights or remedies available to EPA for any other violations by the Respondent of Federal or State laws, regulations, or permitting conditions.

37. Nothing in this CAFO shall relieve Respondent of the duty to comply with all applicable provisions of Section 313 of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11023, and 40 C.F.R. Part 372.

38. Except as specifically provided in this CAFO, nothing herein shall limit the power and authority of EPA or the United States to take, direct, or order all actions to protect public health, welfare, or the environment, or prevent, abate, or minimize an actual or threatened release of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants on, at, or from Respondent's facility. Furthermore, nothing in this CAFO shall be construed to prevent or limit EPA's civil and criminal authorities, or that of other Federal, State, or local agencies or departments, to obtain penalties or injunctive relief under other Federal, State, or local laws or regulations.

C. COSTS

39. Each party shall bear its own costs and attorney's fees. Furthermore, Respondent specifically waives its right to seek reimbursement of its costs and attorney's fees under 5 U.S.C. § 504 and 40 C.F.R. Part 17.


D. EFFECTIVE DATE

40. This CAFO becomes effective upon filing with the Regional Hearing Clerk.

THE UNDERSIGNED PARTIES CONSENT TO THE ENTRY OF THIS CONSENT AGREEMENT AND FINAL ORDER:

FOR THE RESPONDENT:


Date: 8/16/15



Eric Gale
President
US Plating LP

FOR THE COMPLAINANT:

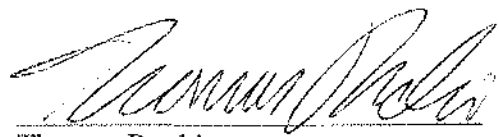
Date: August 20, 2015


for _____
Wren Stenger
Director
Multimedia Planning and
Permitting Division
U.S. EPA Region 6

V. FINAL ORDER

Pursuant to the Consolidated Rules of Practice Governing the Administrative Assessment of Civil Penalties, 40 C.F.R. Part 22, the foregoing Consent Agreement is hereby ratified. This Final Order shall not in any case affect the right of EPA or the United States to pursue appropriate injunctive or other equitable relief or criminal sanctions for any violations of law. This Final Order shall resolve only those causes of action alleged in the Consent Agreement. Nothing in this Final Order shall be construed to waive, extinguish or otherwise affect Respondent's (or its officers, agents, servants, employees, successors, or assigns) obligation to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations, including the regulations that were the subject of this action. Respondent is ordered to comply with the terms of settlement and the civil penalty payment instructions as set forth in the Consent Agreement. In accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 22.31(b), this Final Order shall become effective upon filing with the Regional Hearing Clerk.

Dated 8/20/15



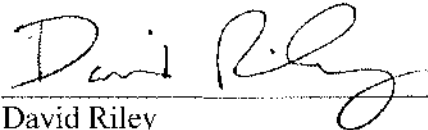
Thomas Rucki
Regional Judicial Officer

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on the 26th day of August, 2015, the original and one copy of the foregoing Consent Agreement and Final Order was hand delivered to the Regional Hearing Clerk, U.S. EPA - Region 6, 1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200, Dallas, Texas 75202-2733, and a true and correct copy was delivered to the following individual(s) by the method indicated below:

CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT # 7012 3050 0001 6500 3328

Eric Gale
President
US Plating LP
2215 Century Circle
Irving, TX 75062



David Riley
EPCRA 313 Enforcement Officer
U.S. EPA Region 6