

## **Rahm Emanuel orders Health Dept. to draft petcoke regulations**

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Chicago Sun-Times (suntimes.com) – Tina Sfondelés

Mayor Rahm Emanuel on Monday ordered the city's Department of Public Health to develop regulations to crack down on the "harmful emission" of petcoke in Chicago.

Emanuel ordered the regulations in light of South Deering residents' complaints about black dust — a byproduct of the oil refinery process — coating their neighborhood, as well as the Illinois Attorney General's office lawsuit against KCBX Terminals Co. and investigations by the U.S. EPA and Illinois EPA, according to mayoral spokesman Bill McCaffrey.

The city will publish a draft copy of the new regulations, then hold a 30-day public comment period before putting the regulations in place — as early as next year.

The city will propose the regulations for the first time in anticipation of increased amounts of petcoke coming into Chicago and stored in facilities on the Calumet River from BP's Whiting refinery located in Indiana, McCaffrey said.

The regulations will address the maintenance and storage of petcoke. Facility operators would have to take additional measures to prevent the emission of petcoke particles onto nearby property and prevent the movement of petcoke into nearby waterways, McCaffrey said.

The U.S. EPA on Friday announced an investigation into KCBX, one operator of a petcoke storage facility along the banks of the Calumet River.

The city has been conducting surprise inspections of petcoke facilities and will continue to do so to push operators to "apply improved practices," he said.

The city has in the past targeted harmful air pollution, including the closure of the Fisk and Crawford coal-fired plants.

In an emailed statement, Tom Shepherd, of the Southeast Environmental Task Force, said: "The people of the Southeast Side will be comforted if the mayor is proposing very strict regulating of the product known as petcoke, which has been choking residents in this area of the city over the past several months. . . . Detroit acted swiftly and the piles of petcoke that had been stored there were removed. The people of Chicago deserve no less."

KCBX issued a statement last week stating that a pending permit with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, which was the subject of a fiery community meeting last week, coincides with \$10 million in upgrades being implemented to improve the site's dust-suppression capabilities.

"The permit does not include any increase in the amount of material to be handled onsite nor does it change currently permitted emissions level," Paul Baltzer, KCBX spokesman said in that statement.