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Neighbors Threatening To Sue Kipp Corporation for Cleaner Air

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MADISON, Wis. -- Madison's Kipp Corp. won approval by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to legally increase emissions at its aluminum and zinc die-casting plant by five and a half times, and local neighbors are so angry they're threatening a lawsuit.



Kipp Emissions Concerns



The increase may sound like a lot, but it is still well below state and federal air quality standards. Both Kipp and the DNR contend the company has never violated air quality standards according to Mark Meunier, vice president of human resources for Kipp.



"The DNR would not grant us a permit if we were in violation of air quality standards... those are the numbers by the DNR and EPA and we're operating well below those standards," said Meunier.

Over the last several years, neighbors who live near the 104-year-old aluminum die casting plants have complained of health concerns and odors emanating from Kipp's smoke stacks.

A local citizens group called Clean Air Madison is now contesting the

DNR's recent decision.

"We want the Department of Natural Resources to start doing its job. AND even more important is that we want Kipp to start living up to what Kipp says it wants to be, which is a good neighbor," said Frank Jabloski, an attorney representing Clean Air Madison.



The group has given Kipp Corp. a 60-day notice it intends to file a lawsuit. "We need to get Kipp's attention," said Jabloski. "we want Kipp to sit down and figure out how to reduce its pollution, not increase its pollution... and not cover that up with a bunch of public relations."

But the DNR says Kipp has nothing to cover up, because they haven't done anything wrong.

"We're concerned people think we're outside the air quality standards but we're far below the health standards set by the EPA and the DNR," said Meunier.

Kipp was granted approval for the maximum emissions allowed under state law, which is 17 pounds of airborne particles per house. But the company says they won't have to go that high.

Kipp Corp. employs 600 people at its factories.

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