

ILLINOIS POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

January 3, 1974

GENERAL TIRE AND RUBBER COMPANY )  
(MOUNT VERNON TIRE PLANT), )  
Petitioner, )  
v. ) PCB 73-371  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, )  
Respondent. )

Don Musick and William Henrick, Attorneys for Petitioner  
Fred Hopper, Assistant Attorney General for the EPA

OPINION AND ORDER OF THE BOARD (by Mr. Henss)

General Tire and Rubber Company is in the final phase of construction of a \$40 million radial tire manufacturing plant in Mt. Vernon, Illinois. Plant heat and process steam requirements for the plant are to be supplied by two 70 million Btu/hr. Murray-Trane boilers.

On July 23, 1973, Petitioner applied to the Environmental Protection Agency for a construction permit for the oil fired boilers. At that time, Petitioner specified that #6 fuel oil with a sulfur content of 0.74% would be used for fuel. Satisfied that Petitioner's emissions would be in compliance with all Rules and Regulations, the Agency granted the construction permit on September 12, 1973.

After making application for the construction permit but before the Agency approval, Petitioner discovered that it was unable to secure any firm commitment for the low sulfur fuel oil. General Tire then filed a request for variance from Rule 204 of the Illinois Air Pollution Control Regulations in order to temporarily allow the burning of #6 fuel oil containing 3% maximum sulfur content (2.5% typical).

In the Petition for Variance, Petitioner stated that the plant, designed to produce 2,000 radial tires per day, was scheduled for startup in mid-November 1973. Attached to the Petition were copies of letters from 9 major oil companies which substantiate

Petitioner's claim that extensive efforts to secure low sulfur fuel oil have been fruitless. Adding to Petitioner's fuel problem is the present fuel allotment program which is based on 1972 fuel usage. Petitioner was not in operation during 1972 and thus did not establish a base allotment on which to secure fuel for 1973.

General Tire maintains that the requirement for variance will exist until the Company can 1) secure adequate commitment for supplies of #2 fuel oil, #5 low sulfur fuel oil, or #6 low sulfur fuel oil, or 2) select, design, engineer and install a flue gas desulfurization unit on the plant's single stack. General Tire has already initiated efforts to control sulfur oxide and estimates that a flue gas desulfurization control program will cost from \$300,000 to \$1 million.

If the variance is allowed, General Tire agrees to 1) continue to seek low sulfur fuel oil, 2) seek a long-term contract for low sulfur fuel oil, or, 3) in the event such fuel oil contracts are not secured by August 1, 1974, install sulfur oxide removal equipment by May 30, 1975.

The Agency states that Petitioner has made a serious attempt at compliance and should be granted the variance subject to certain conditions. An Agency representative visited the plant site on September 4, 1973 where he discussed the proposed variance with several area residents. They made no objection to the granting of the variance.

A public hearing on the variance request was held on November 20, 1973. Petitioner's plant engineer, John Cappellin, testified that the plant is now scheduled for startup in mid-December 1973. During the design phase of the plant, General Tire had originally considered natural gas, #2 fuel oil and #6 fuel oil for the plant boilers. Natural gas was quickly eliminated from further consideration when it was learned that supplies of this fuel were not available for commercial establishments in the Mt. Vernon area.

After filing the variance petition, General Tire was able to secure 550,000 gallons of #6 fuel oil from a local supplier. The fuel oil, thought to have a sulfur content of 0.96%, was tested and found to have a sulfur content of 1.07%. About 35,000 gallons of #2 fuel oil was obtained during this time. Petitioner plans to start its boilers on #2 fuel oil (low sulfur) and then switch to the #6 fuel oil when sufficient heat has been applied to the more viscous #6 oil to allow a smooth flow to the boilers (R. 17).

Once the plant achieves maximum capacity, approximately 5 million gallons of fuel oil will be required annually (R. 10). A commitment for an additional 1 million gallons from the local supplier has been obtained (R. 15) and should last through the startup phase or until early fall of 1974. Sulfur content of the additional fuel was not revealed in the record.

Petitioner has already obtained preliminary cost figures for its proposed flue gas desulfurization system. William Lang, Manager of Chemical Engineering and Chairman of the Corporate Environmental Control Committee, testified that the Chemical Construction Corporation roughly estimated \$1.1 million as the construction cost of the proposed system (R. 36). The system would require about 24 months for construction.

General Tire has investigated the feasibility of constructing additional facilities at Mt. Vernon to remove the sulfur from high sulfur fuel oil prior to burning and is now investigating the possibility of gaining proprietary access to low sulfur fuel oil by investing money in an oil refinery (R. 44).

Robert J. Schreiber, Jr., an Agency engineer, testified that Petitioner's sulfur dioxide emissions would be about 3,388 lbs. per day if the plant were operating in compliance with the Regulations. He estimated that the burning of 1.07% sulfur fuel oil would add an additional 372 lbs. of sulfur dioxide per day over the allowable rate. Schreiber testified that there were no large (5,000 lbs./day) sulfur dioxide emission sources in the Mt. Vernon area presently. Schreiber also testified that it was his opinion that the sulfur dioxide emissions from the plant would not pose any serious health hazard for the area (R. 54). If fuel with a higher sulfur content is ultimately used, of course the sulfur dioxide emissions would be higher.

We believe Petitioner has proven its need for a variance. The attempt to secure adequate supplies of low sulfur fuel oil was exhaustive and fruitless. Time will be needed to obtain a low sulfur fuel supply or install flue gas desulfurization equipment. By using present fuel oil supplies Petitioner will add about 10% more sulfur dioxide to the Mt. Vernon atmosphere than the Company would emit if it were operating in compliance, but the Agency does not believe this quantity of additional emissions will create any serious health hazards in the area. Petitioner has indicated that it is willing to comply with the conditions requested by the Agency.

General Tire has invested \$40 million in an area which needs the stimulus of industry. Ultimately Petitioner will employ 450 to 1,000 persons. The Company has expended a great deal of effort in its attempt to comply with the Regulations. It has committed itself to the installation of sulfur dioxide control equipment in

the event it is unable to secure contracts for adequate supplies of low sulfur fuel oil. From the record we believe that the Company will continue with its efforts until compliance is achieved. The variance will be granted subject to those conditions suggested by the Agency.

ORDER

It is the Order of the Pollution Control Board that:

General Tire and Rubber Company be granted a variance from Rule 204 of the Illinois Air Pollution Control Regulations for its Mt. Vernon tire plant until December 20, 1974. The variance is subject to the following conditions:

- a) Petitioner shall continue good faith negotiations for securing an adequate supply of low sulfur fuel oil and immediately use such oil upon its availability regardless of any other date set forth in this order.
- b) Petitioner shall submit quarterly progress reports to the Environmental Protection Agency. Said progress reports shall commence on January 15, 1974 and shall provide details on the characteristics and usage of fuel oil, progress in choosing a control option, and negotiations for long term contracts guaranteeing an adequate supply of low sulfur fuel oil.
- c) Petitioner shall reapply to the Board for any extension of this variance by September 20, 1974 if compliance with Rule 204 of the Air Pollution Control Regulations has not been achieved by that date.

I, Christian L. Moffett, Clerk of the Illinois Pollution Control Board, hereby certify the above Opinion and Order was adopted this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 1974 by a vote of 5 to 0.

Christian L. Moffett