

ILLINOIS POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD  
December 21, 2017

FREEDOM OIL COMPANY, )  
 )  
 Petitioner, )  
 )  
 v. ) PCB 18-6  
 ) (UST Appeal)  
 ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL )  
 PROTECTION AGENCY, )  
 )  
 Respondent. )

ORDER OF THE BOARD (by C.M. Santos):

On September 7, 2017, at the parties' request, the Board extended until December 4, 2017, the deadline for Freedom Oil Company (Freedom Oil) to appeal a July 27, 2017 determination of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA or Agency). IEPA's determination concerns Freedom Oil's leaking underground storage tank (UST) site located at 957 West Reynolds Street in Pontiac, Livingston County. On December 4, 2017, Freedom Oil timely filed a petition asking the Board to review the Agency's determination. *See* 415 ILCS 5/40(a)(1) (2016); 35 Ill. Adm. Code 101.300(b), 105.402, 105.404, 105.406. For the reasons below, the Board accepts Freedom Oil's petition for review.

Under the Environmental Protection Act (Act) (415 ILCS 5 (2016)), IEPA decides whether to approve proposed cleanup plans and budgets for leaking UST sites, as well as requests for cleanup cost reimbursement from the State's UST Fund, which consists of UST fees and motor fuel taxes. If IEPA disapproves or modifies a submittal, the UST owner or operator may appeal the decision to the Board. *See* 415 ILCS 5/40(a)(1), 57-57.17 (2016); 35 Ill. Adm. Code 105.Subpart D. In this case, partially denied Freedom Oil's request for reimbursement from the UST Fund. Freedom Oil appeals on the grounds that the denied costs were reasonable, customary, and necessary to remediate and close the site. Freedom Oil's petition meets the content requirements of 35 Ill. Adm. Code 105.408.

The Board accepts the petition for hearing. Freedom Oil has the burden of proof. *See* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 105.112(a). Hearings will be based exclusively on the record before IEPA at the time IEPA issued its determination. *See* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 105.412. Accordingly, though the Board hearing affords petitioner the opportunity to challenge IEPA's reasons for its decision, information developed after IEPA's decision typically is not admitted at hearing or considered by the Board. *See* Alton Packaging Corp. v. PCB, 162 Ill. App. 3d 731, 738, 516 N.E.2d 275, 280 (5th Dist. 1987); Community Landfill Co. & City of Morris v. IEPA, PCB 01-170 (Dec. 6, 2001), *aff'd sub nom.* Community Landfill Co. & City of Morris v. PCB & IEPA, 331 Ill. App. 3d 1056, 772 N.E.2d 231 (3rd Dist. 2002).

Upon its own motion or the motion of any party, the Board or the hearing officer may order that the hearing be held by videoconference. In deciding whether to hold the hearing by videoconference, factors that the Board or the hearing officer will consider include cost-effectiveness, efficiency, facility accommodations, witness availability, public interest, the parties' preferences, and the proceeding's complexity and contentiousness. *See* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 101.600(b), 105.110.

Hearings will be scheduled and completed in a timely manner, consistent with the decision deadline (*see* 415 ILCS 5/40(a)(2) (2016)), which only Freedom Oil may extend by waiver (*see* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 101.308). On December 14, 2017, Freedom Oil waived the Board's decision deadline to June 30, 2018. *See* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 105.114(a). The Board meeting immediately before that date is scheduled for June 21, 2018. If the Board fails to take final action by the decision deadline, Freedom Oil may deem its request granted. *See* 415 ILCS 5/40(a)(2) (2016).

Unless the Board or the hearing officer orders otherwise, IEPA must file the entire record of its determination by Wednesday, January 3, 2018, the 30th day after the date on which the Board received Freedom Oil's petition. *See* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 105.116(a), 105.410(a). If IEPA wishes to seek additional time to file the record, it must file a request for extension before the date on which the record is due to be filed. *See* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 105.116(a). The record must comply with the Board's requirements for content, organization, and certification. *See* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 101.1030(g), 105.116(b), 105.410(b). In addition, IEPA must file the record electronically instead of in paper. Specifically, the record must be filed through the Clerk's Office On-Line (COOL) or on compact disk or other portable electronic data storage device and, to the extent technically feasible, in text-searchable Adobe PDF. *See* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 101.302(h)(2)(A), 105.116(a).<sup>1</sup>

IT IS SO ORDERED.

I, Don A. Brown, Clerk of the Illinois Pollution Control Board, certify that the Board adopted the above order on December 21, 2017, by a vote of 5-0.



Don A. Brown, Clerk  
Illinois Pollution Control Board

---

<sup>1</sup> Any questions about filing the record in an electronic format should be directed to the Clerk's Office at (312) 814-3620 or (312) 814-3461.