Request for an Alternative Means of Emission Limitation to Use Multi-Point Ground Flares at Chevron Phillips Chemical Company LP

Action

- On June 1, 2017, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved Chevron Phillips Chemical Company LP (CP Chem's) request for an alternative means of emission limitation (AMEL). The company plans to operate a multi-point ground flare (MPGF) at each of the following two plants under construction:
    - Polyethylene plant in Old Ocean, Texas
    - Ethylene plant in Baytown, Texas

- The Clean Air Act provides a procedure for a regulated facility to seek approval for an AMEL. This final action specifies the operating conditions and monitoring, recordkeeping and reporting requirements necessary to ensure that the MPGFs proposed for use by CP Chem will achieve at least an equivalent level of emissions reductions as required by applicable New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) and National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP).

- CP Chem is seeking to commence start-up of their new polyethylene plant in late June/early July 2017 while the new ethylene plant will open at a later date.

Background

- On April 4, 2017, the EPA issued an initial notice requesting comments on CP Chem's AMEL request and did not receive any substantive public comments.

- Units at these facilities would be subject to a number of air emission standards, including the Miscellaneous Organic NESHAP, the Ethylene Production NESHAP, and Synthetic Organic Chemical Manufacturing Industry NSPS for Distillation, Reactors, Storage Tanks, Equipment Leaks, and Polymer Manufacturing. These rules incorporate the flare requirements specified in the General Provisions.

- The MPGF cannot meet the maximum permitted velocity flare requirements in the General Provisions because they operate at higher pressure and are designed to operate smokelessly at higher exit velocities than that of traditional elevated flares.

- The MPGF are capable of handling much larger waste gas flows than elevated flares. They operate smokelessly and achieve high combustion efficiencies under a wide range of conditions.

- To demonstrate good combustion efficiency at all times, the MPGF burner manufacturers have conducted combustion efficiency testing on the individual burners. Based on these tests, EPA has developed operational limits that provide for good combustion efficiency.

For More Information

- To read the final action, including additional fact sheets, visit https://www3.epa.gov/airtoxics/groundflares/groundflarespg.html.