



An Innovative Community; Authentically Hometown

City Appeals Ohio EPA Lime Removal Orders

Agency directives could cost Mount Vernon more than \$3 million

MOUNT VERNON, October 4, 2022 – The City of Mount Vernon filed a Notice of Appeal with the Environmental Review Appeals Commission earlier this week concerning the Ohio EPA’s Unilateral Order to the City related to lime residuals removal. The City has identified multiple legal and factual errors in the order and requests the commission vacate it.

The order, which was issued to the City on Sept. 14, 2022, directs the City to remove all the lime residuals that it has been temporarily storing on City-owned property adjacent to the Water Treatment Plant. The material was relocated from the treatment plant to avoid a potentially disastrous interference with the operation of the plant.

“We were negotiating in good faith with the Ohio EPA on a plan and timeline to remove the lime and provide it to local farmers, for whom it is a valuable commodity, when the agency dropped the order on us out of the blue,” said Mayor Matt Starr.

“The timeline the OEPA has mandated is completely unrealistic and could well cost the City millions of dollars. And it is completely unnecessary. The material has been tested and is completely benign. And it is something that our local farmers want and need.”

The order directs the City to haul the lime to a landfill if it is unable to find a sufficient number of farmers willing to take all the material.

“This aspect of the order is completely irresponsible,” said Starr, “as the cost to the City could exceed \$3 million. Since the lime has been approved for application to farm fields, requiring the City to put it in a landfill if we can’t meet OEPA’s arbitrary milestones is just silly.”

In addition to pointing out that the Ohio EPA initially approved the City’s relocation of the residuals and stated that no permits were required, the City’s appeal contends that the agency is without the legal authority to order the removal at all, much less in the arbitrarily short time frame demanded.

In the meantime, the City will continue seeking interested farmers who want the lime free of charge.

For more information on how to obtain free lime from the City’s Water Treatment Plant, call the City Water Office at (740) 393-9504.

END

ABOUT THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON:

The City of Mount Vernon is an innovative community with an authentic hometown feel. The City is dedicated to providing modern services with an emphasis on continual improvement, customer service and equitable laws that support our citizens and visitors, while retaining and attracting investors in our community. Home to 17,000 people, Mount Vernon is the county seat for Knox County and boasts historic buildings and districts as well as business and professional, educational and recreational opportunities through many adaptive reuses of the community’s infrastructure and spaces.

The City has strong ties to higher education, with Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Kenyon College and Central Ohio Technical College operating satellite locations in the historic downtown. Located 40 miles northeast of Columbus, Mount Vernon is near the geographic center of Ohio and has connections all over the globe.

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