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News Release

Ethanol Plant Assessed Penalty for Air Emission Violations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 14, 2000
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Willmar, Minn. -- The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) assessed a \$3,850 penalty to Minnesota Energy, Buffalo Lake, for air emission permit violations. The ethanol production facility corrected the four violations and paid the penalty within the 30-day deadline.

The violations occurred when the company shut down a scrubber for 17 days in January 1999, and operated another piece of pollution control equipment - a cooling cyclone - beyond authorized limits. It did not give the MPCA proper notification and continued to operate the facility without another method of monitoring air emissions.

Minnesota Energy is a farmer-owned cooperative with about 325 members. The facility began production in 1997. It processes corn to produce about 14.5 million gallons of ethyl alcohol annually.

In determining the amount of the penalty the MPCA considers whether the violations were willful, whether there was economic benefit, the history of past violations, the number of violations, and the gravity of the violations. The maximum penalty amount for administrative penalty order violations is \$10,000.



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