

## **Cleaner Air For Denver Area Result Of Major Settlement**

3.2 million pounds of polluting chemicals per year will be removed from Colorado's air following a settlement reached today between the State of Colorado, Department of Justice, Environmental Protection Agency and Denver based PDC Energy.

A civil complaint filed June 26<sup>th</sup> alleged that PDC had failed to adequately control the emission of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) at its Denver-area oil and gas exploration and production facilities, in particular its condensate storage tanks. The violations were discovered by Colorado state inspectors.

According to Environment Colorado state director Garrett Garner-Wells. "Environment Colorado has been pursuing this result for more than five years through local, state and federal lobbying and communication efforts. While we regret the huge volume of toxic chemicals to which Denver residents were needlessly exposed in that time, progress is progress and we are pleased with today's result."

Terms of the settlement call for PDC to spend an estimated 18 million dollars on system upgrades, improved operations and maintenance practices, monitoring, and inspections. The work has already begun, with a mandated completion deadline of June 30, 2019. There is also a \$2.5 million civil penalty that will be split evenly by the state and federal governments.

In announcing the settlement, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt said, "This case exemplifies the strong partnerships with states that are integral to delivering results for American communities and finding solutions that build compliance with the law and prevent future violations."

Pruitt added that the agreement "will result in cleaner air in the Denver area and shows that EPA is committed to enforcing the law in order to ensure public health is protected."

Volatile organic compounds are a key component in the formation of smog or ground-level ozone, a pollutant that irritates the lungs, exacerbates diseases like asthma, and can increase susceptibility to illnesses including pneumonia and bronchitis.

The consent decree is available for viewing at [justice.gov/enrd/consent-decrees](https://www.justice.gov/enrd/consent-decrees). More info on the settlement can be found at [EnvironmentColorado.org/PDC](http://EnvironmentColorado.org/PDC) or [epa.gov/enforcement/pdc-energy-inc-clean-air-act-settlement](https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/pdc-energy-inc-clean-air-act-settlement).