

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
AIR QUALITY DIVISION
ACTIVITY REPORT: Complaint Investigation

U14230175766859

FACILITY: Mike's Paint Shop		SRN / ID: U142301757
LOCATION: 14701 US Highway 12, Union		DISTRICT: Kalamazoo
CITY: Union		COUNTY: CASS
CONTACT: Michael Bradley , Owner		ACTIVITY DATE: 03/01/2023
STAFF: Rachel Benaway	COMPLIANCE STATUS: Non Compliance	SOURCE CLASS:
SUBJECT: On-site complaint investigation to assess fugitive odors and compliance with all state and federal air use regulations.		
RESOLVED COMPLAINTS: C-23-00955		

On February 7th and 8th, AQD received two electronically submitted, anonymous, complaint referrals from the USEPA regarding Mike's Paint Shop in Union, MI, Cass County (SRN/ID: U142301757). One complaint alleged noticing overspray on vehicles in the adjacent neighborhood and the other complaint alleged a coating operation without a permit, lack of proper filter maintenance in the paint booths, and dumping chemicals on the ground and burying it. EGLE Division Supervisors discussed a complaint from 2019 that resulted in an investigation of the exterior of the facility by an Environmental Compliance Officer (Ken Cerny). Images from that investigation displayed a burn pit and a pile of accumulated waste containers at the back of the property. EGLE Staff, Krista Hettich from the Materials Management Division (MMD) and Rachel Benaway from the Air Quality Division (AQD), conducted a joint inspection on 3/1/2023 to assess the use of exemptions from permitting, potential open burning violations, and the facility's handling of hazardous waste materials.

Michael Bradley is the facility owner and was present for the investigation. Staff provided an explanation for the purpose of the unannounced inspection and explained that in order for the facility to operate under an exemption from permitting (R 336.1287(2)(c)), records of coating usage for the previous 2-year period would be requested and coating material usage rates will be assessed. The facility employs approximately 13 people working 1 shift per day, 4 days a week. The facility has an updated, wall-mounted natural gas boiler system for space heating purposes (Exempt R 336.1282(2)(b)). There is a parts washer that was observed to have the lid in the closed position and appears to be exempt from permitting requirements (Exempt R 336.1281(2)(h)). There are no emergency generators on site.

Before entering, Staff walked around the exterior of the building. A burn pit was observed to contain yard waste, treated wood including furniture parts and pallets, and various plastic trash items. Staff gave the facility owner information on the open burning laws in Michigan and advised not to burn the items but instead take them to the landfill or find a resource for recycling. Mr. Bradley later reported that the material from the burn pit was removed and that the pit would be filled in and no longer used. There was a strong solvent odor detected at the southeast corner of the building that Staff believes to be the result of improper filtration on some exhaust port on the building. The confirmation of the existence of this odor coincides with the odor complaint received by AQD. Staff observed numerous stacks on the rooftop and Mr. Bradley reported that all stacks were installed according to the recommendations of the paint booth manufacturers.

The facility coats plastic parts for the automobile industry. The parts are first washed with dish soap and water in a preparation room with a floor drainage system, although various cleaning

products such as bleach bottles were observed in the room. Recommendations were made to the Water Resources Division as to the permissibility of this activity. This room has an exhaust port in a window that is covered by a plastic bag secured with tape. In warmer months, the plastic bag is removed to ventilate the area. Staff suggests that the facility assess all potential opportunities for unfiltered, fugitive emissions to the ambient air to prevent future complaints of odor disturbances from the adjacent neighborhood.

Parts are sanded in preparation for painting in an alcove area off a main shop room. Dust is managed by a cross-draft ventilation unit that exhausts outside and is equipped with elongated filter panels that should fit from the floor to approximately 6 or 7 feet up. At the time of this inspection, the filters were installed improperly and were torn away and missing from the floor to approximately 3 feet up. Staff asked why the filters were installed in that manner but did not receive a satisfactory reason. Mr. Bradley had the filters replaced to fit properly along the entire filtration unit before Staff left the building. Staff will be issuing a Violation Notice for the improper installation and operation of filters to a unit that exhausts particulate matter to the ambient air.

Staff observed a significant supply of filter material stored on site and requested and received Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS's) for two of the filter materials (Fiberbond, E.P. Green Dual-Density Polyester Collection Material with a 99.74% removal efficiency and Camfil Aeropleat III MERV 8 pleated panel filters). Mr. Bradley also submitted a document noting filter purchases from 3/7/21 to 3/7/23 that included a total of four different paint arrestor roll media, polyester links/panels, polyester roll media, Non-CF HVAC rolls/pads, Aeropleat III 4" filters (MERV 8), and HI-FLO MERV 14 filters.

The facility has five paint booths with the employee name who primarily uses each booth as a naming convention (Harley, Nicky, Abigail, and Monica). Harley's booth is a downdraft unit. Nicky's, Abigail's, and Monica's booths all appear to be either cross-draft or semi-downdraft units with top-side air flow. Booth filters are reportedly changed every week and disposed of in a dumpster on the premises. Nicky's filters had just been replaced the previous day whereas Monica's filters were in need of changing. The last paint booth is currently being utilized as a repair room because the exhaust system has not yet been installed. Staff did not observe any sign of coating activities occurring in that booth at the time of this inspection.

The facility reported that it reclaims approximately 20 gallons of cleaning solvent material each month. There is an exemption for solvent distillation and antifreeze reclamation equipment that has a rated batch capacity of not more than 55 gallons. This activity appears to be exempt from permitting (Rule 336.1285(u)).

Staff explained that utilizing an exemption from permitting for the coating operations requires the facility to maintain coating usage records, on site, at all times, for the previous two-year period but the facility has not been maintaining these records in a satisfactory way to demonstrate coating usage. Mr. Bradley reported that after the inspection he placed coating usage logs in each paint booth so that usage can be regularly tracked by his employees. The facility submitted MSDS's for their coating materials. The facility orders between 17 to 27 different types of coatings each month that include: clear coats, hardeners, bases and colors, primers, activators, accelerators, and anywhere from 3 to 5 types of non-sprayable materials. The facility only submitted 17 MSDS's for coating materials, including 5 that they report they

have used in the past 2 years but are no longer using. Staff eventually received documentation of coating material purchases for the previous two years demonstrating the facility purchased more than 200 gallons of coating materials almost every month and is not eligible to utilize an exemption from permitting. The facility will receive a Violation Notice for failure to obtain a Permit-to-Install (PTI) for their coating operation and will also receive assistance for navigating the process to obtain a PTI. The facility will need to address whether or not they are subject to any federal air use regulations in addition to the Michigan Air Pollution Control Rules of which they are currently in violation.

NAME 

DATE 3/31/23

SUPERVISOR  4/3/23