

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
AIR QUALITY DIVISION
ACTIVITY REPORT: On-site Inspection

N575773747

FACILITY: MONO CERAMICS INC		SRN / ID: N5757
LOCATION: 2235 PIPESTONE RD, BENTON HARBOR		DISTRICT: Kalamazoo
CITY: BENTON HARBOR		COUNTY: BERRIEN
CONTACT:		ACTIVITY DATE: 09/12/2024
STAFF: Chance Collins	COMPLIANCE STATUS: Compliance	SOURCE CLASS: MINOR
SUBJECT: Scheduled Inspection		
RESOLVED COMPLAINTS:		

On September 12, 2024, AQD staff traveled to Berrien County to perform an inspection of MONO Ceramics INC (SRN: N5757). The inspection was to determine the facility's compliance with applicable state and federal air pollution control regulations. The facility was once operated under Permit to Install No. 21-96 for three natural gas fired kilns, which was voided in 2010.

AQD staff arrived on site at 10:20 a.m. to sunny conditions with a temperature of 76°F with an ESE wind of 7 mph. There were no noticeable odors upon arrival. AQD staff met with Mr. Frank Mitchell (Vice President of Manufacturing), who walked staff around the facility and answered all questions.

Mono Ceramics currently employs 20 floor and six office workers. They typically work one shift five days per week. The facility makes refractory products, mainly lances for the steel industry. The lances are used by the steel mills to inject various materials into molten steel.

The process at the facility starts at dry hoppers where they mix various materials to make their own refractory. The materials are pre-weighed and are automatically added to the hoppers where they get mixed and end up in a silo. When the material is needed it is discharged out the bottom into large tote bags. The process is controlled by a baghouse and appears to be exempt under Rule 336.1284(k). The bags are changed as necessary. Once the refractory materials have been mixed, it then goes to the wet hoppers where water gets added and is mixed by an auger. This process vents inside. When the material has been sufficiently mixed, it is poured into forms that are cylindrical and under the floor. The forms can be changed depending on which product is requested. The forms are typically dried for 24 hours and then go into kilns where they are cured at 325°C (617°F). The facility currently has 3 kilns but only 2 are operated at a time, which are automated and are equipped with flame sensors for each individual burner. The kilns will shut down if a flame is not recognized for each burner. The process takes about a week for finished product ready for shipping/receiving and welding. At time of inspection, the facility appears to be in compliance.

NAME

DATE 9/12/2024SUPERVISOR Monica Brothers