

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
AIR QUALITY DIVISION  
ACTIVITY REPORT: Self Initiated Inspection

N172252196

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|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| FACILITY: BIEWER SAWMILL INC                         |                               | SRN / ID: N1722           |
| LOCATION: 6251 GERWOUDE, MCBAIN                      |                               | DISTRICT: Cadillac        |
| CITY: MCBAIN   |                               | COUNTY: MISSAUKEE         |
| CONTACT: Kris Demel ,                                |                               | ACTIVITY DATE: 01/15/2020 |
| STAFF: Kurt Childs                                   | COMPLIANCE STATUS: Compliance |                           |
| SUBJECT: Follow-up inspection regarding VN response. |                               | SOURCE CLASS: SM OPT OUT  |
| RESOLVED COMPLAINTS:                                 |                               |                           |

On January 15, 2020 AQD staff Jodi Lindgren and I conducted a follow-up site visit to Biewer Sawmill as a result of Biewer's response to the December 12, 2019 Violation Notice. That violation notice was regarding excess opacity from the wood fired boiler. Biewer's response indicated the cause was plugging of the multi-clone, which precedes the electrostatic precipitator. Biewer also indicated several steps they have taken to prevent that from re-occurring and to better monitor boiler opacity.

We met with Mr. Kris Demel the plant manager who accompanied us on our inspection of the boiler, multi-clone and ESP. He also provided additional details regarding the revised operations and monitoring. Larger particulate matter from the boiler is removed by the multi-clone. The material that is removed accumulates in a hopper beneath the multi-clone. If the material accumulates too quickly or is not removed from the hopper, it can build up until it blocks off the discharge side of the cyclones within the multi-clone. When this happens airflow passes through the cyclone without being treated, individual cyclones can also become completely plugged.


At the time of the incident, it appears that the hopper was not being emptied frequently enough. This activity was not being tracked. The problem was not detected because instantaneous opacity was only being checked manually on an hourly basis but not consistently. Also because the multi-clone was not being monitored for differential pressure or for flyash accumulation.

Biewer has instituted a process for requiring and logging regular removal of flyash from the hopper with oversight by plant management. Additionally, during our inspection I pointed out the digital differential pressure gauge on the multi-clone and recommended they make sure it is working and then use that as well. Biewer will also be replacing the current hopper emptying system with a more automated system in April 2020. This will eliminate the need to manually dump the contents of the hopper. The multi-clone is inspected twice per year during maintenance shut-downs at the plant.

The ESP stack is equipped with an opacity monitor and two gauges in the control room that read out in either instantaneous or 6-minute average opacity. Plant operators will be using the 6-minute average reading and logging the data hourly going forward. Data will be reviewed daily by the department supervisor, head of maintenance, and plant manager. The opacity monitor does not have the capability to provide a continuous readout but data from the monitor is logged and now can be accessed by plant personell, where previously it was only available through request to their vendor.

PTI 286-05 requires a Malfunction Abatement Plan for the ESP. A copy of the plan is on file with the AQD Cadillac District Office. I suggested to Mr. Demel that Biewer add a section for the multi-clone as well to ensure regular preventative maintenance and response to malfunctions in the future.

Based on Biewer Sawmill's written response to the VN and our follow-up inspection, it appears that Biewer has provided an appropriate response to the VN.

NAME  DATE 1-17-20 SUPERVISOR 