



Illinois EPA Completes Forced Removal Action at Patriot Tire Shredders

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EAST ST. LOUIS – Illinois EPA Director John J. Kim announced the completion of a large used tire removal action at Patriot Tire Shredders, located at 147 South 15th Street, East St. Louis, an environmental justice area in St. Clair County. Illinois EPA has authority under the Illinois Environmental Protection Act to carry out forced removals when an accumulation of used or waste tires poses a threat to public health or the environment. This forced removal action was conducted under an order issued by the St. Clair County Circuit Court. The forced removal action began on April 6 and was completed on May 14, 2020. A total of 2,369.41 tons of used/waste tires (the equivalent of 210,614 passenger tires) were removed from the property at a cost of \$496,053.61. This cost of the removal was paid for by funds from the Illinois EPA's Used Tire Program.

“The quantity of waste tires left unmanaged at this site posed a threat to the environment and a significant fire hazard within the community,” said Director Kim. “This was a significant undertaking, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, but the Illinois EPA remains committed to addressing these environmental hazards to protect residents and communities when responsible parties fail to comply with environmental regulations.”

The site's operator, Terry Nelson, and the property owner, Maurice Carraway, allowed the accumulation of used or waste tires at the site since operations began in December 2018. Illinois EPA issued a violation notice in March 2019 and identified additional violations in April and May of 2019. The matter was referred to the Attorney General's Office in August 2019. The operator did not reduce the tonnage of used tires accumulated at the site as directed by a Preliminary Injunction Order issued in August 2019. As a result, an order was issued in St. Clair County Circuit Court in January 2020 that effectively shut down the site. The Agency subsequently initiated the tire removal action because it was believed that the operator would abandon the site, leaving a significant threat to human health and the environment posed by the very large accumulation of used tires.

In addition to being located in an environmental justice area, the site is close to schools, nursing homes, public housing, and residences. Used tires serve as habitats for disease-carrying insects, particularly mosquitoes. Removal of tires further reduce the threat of mosquito-borne diseases.

Through Illinois EPA's Used Tire Program, used tires are properly disposed of at a registered, commercial used tire processing facility in Illinois. Some tires are retreaded and reused, and others are recycled into a variety of products and uses. The Illinois EPA's Used Tire Program is funded by a \$2.50 per tire fee that consumers pay when purchasing tires at retail.