

May 17, 2005

Mr. Alfred A. Slowik
Designated Representative
EME Homer City Generation L.P.
1750 Power Plant Road
Homer City, PA 15748

Re: Request for an Exemption from Continuous Opacity Monitoring Requirements for Unit 3 at the Homer City Generating Station (Facility ID (ORISPL) 3122)

Dear Mr. Slowik:

This is in response to your September 16, 2004 petition under §75.66, in which EME Homer City Generation L.P. (EME) requested an exemption from the requirement to install a continuous opacity monitoring system on Unit 3 at the Homer City, Pennsylvania Generating Station. EPA approves the petition, for the reasons discussed below.

Background

EME owns and operates a coal-fired boiler, Unit 3, at the Homer City Generating Station in Homer City, Pennsylvania. Unit 3 is subject to the Acid Rain Program. Therefore, EME is required to continuously monitor and report sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), and carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions and heat input for Unit 3, in accordance with 40 CFR Part 75. Part 75 also requires the owner or operator of a coal-fired unit to install and certify a continuous opacity monitoring system (COMS), unless the effluent gas stream is saturated and the owner or operator can demonstrate that the presence of condensed water impedes the accuracy of the opacity measurements (see §§75.14 (a) and (b)).

Because Homer City Unit 3 has a wet flue gas desulfurization (FGD) system to control SO₂ emissions, EME believes that the unit qualifies for an exemption from the opacity monitoring requirement under §75.14(b). Therefore, EME submitted a petition to EPA on September 16, 2004, requesting this exemption. The petition included demonstration data to show that the gas stream is saturated.

On October 28, 2003, EPA issued new policy guidance on how to qualify for the opacity monitoring exemption under §75.14(b). The new guidance states that the data used to demonstrate that the effluent gas stream is saturated should be collected under conditions representative of normal operations (i.e., normal load, normal fuel, common weather conditions, and normal emission

control equipment operation). In the September 16, 2004 petition, EME provided some, but not all of the information needed to document that the moisture data were collected under normal operating conditions. On December 9, 2004 and April 8, 2005, EME provided additional information on the weather conditions and the fuel burned during the moisture tests, in response to a request from EPA.

EPA's Determination

In the September 16, 2004 petition, EME provided ten sets of stack gas moisture data for Unit 3. EPA Reference Method 4 was used for the tests, which were performed between September 26, 2001 and June 10, 2004. All ten sets of test data indicate that the stack gas moisture content was above the saturation level.

According to EME, the moisture data were collected at conditions representative of normal unit load and normal FGD operation. EPA confirmed this by examining the hourly load data and SO₂ concentration data at the time of the moisture tests, as reported by EME in the quarterly electronic data reports (EDRs) for Unit 3.

However, based solely on the information provided in the September 16, 2004 petition, EPA could not confirm that the normal fuel was combusted during the moisture tests or that common weather conditions existed at the time of the tests. Therefore, the Agency requested additional information on the type of fuel combusted and the weather conditions, which EME provided on December 9, 2004 and April 8, 2005.

From the additional data provided by EME, EPA was able to establish that for one data set, i.e., the December 9, 2003 moisture data, the weather during the testing represented common weather conditions for the Homer City area at that time of the year. The Agency was also able to confirm that the fuel burned during the December 9, 2003 testing was the normal fuel for Unit 3. Therefore, the data and supplementary information provided by EME for the December 9, 2003 moisture testing meet the requirements of the October 28, 2003 policy guidance. For the other nine data sets, the weather data were less conclusive. However, as previously noted, these moisture data were collected at normal load with the SO₂ control device operating properly, and in all cases, the test results showed the effluent gas stream to be saturated.

In view of these considerations, EPA approves EME's petition for an exemption from the requirement to install a continuous opacity monitoring system on Unit 3 at the Homer City Generating Station

EPA's determination relies on the accuracy and completeness of the information in the September 16, 2004 petition and letter and in the supplementary information provided on December 9, 2004 and April 8, 2005 and is appealable under Part 78 of the Acid Rain regulations. If there are

any further questions or concerns about this matter, please contact John Schakenbach of my staff at 202-343-9158 or at (schakenbach.john@epa.gov).

Sincerely,

/s/

Sam Napolitano, Director
Clean Air Markets Division

cc: Bob Vollaro, CAMD, EMB
Ujval Shukla, CAMD, MOB
Jerry Curtin, EPA Region III
Charles Zadakis, PADEP
Gary Cline, Homer City Station