

November 19, 2020

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL ANNOUNCES SETTLEMENT WITH HILCO OVER SMOKESTACK
DEMOLITION**

Settlement Includes Funding to Improve Health Outcomes in Little Village Community

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today [announced a settlement](#) that resolves his lawsuit against Hilco Redevelopment, LLC, doing business as Hilco Redevelopment Partners (Hilco); HRP Exchange 55, LLC; MCM Management Corp. (MCM); and Controlled Demolition Inc. (CDI). Raoul filed a lawsuit following the release of contaminants during the demolition of the smokestack at the former Crawford Electric Generating Station in Chicago.

Raoul's office filed a consent order in Cook County Circuit Court that requires the companies to comply with dust mitigation plans for the remainder of the demolition project and provide funding that will support the Little Village community's long-term health and wellness. Attorney General Raoul filed a lawsuit in May alleging the defendants failed to take adequate steps to protect the community from a cloud of particulate matter that resulted from demolition of the facility's 378-foot smokestack.

"The settlement today holds the companies accountable for their failure to adequately protect residents from air pollution during demolition at the site. It also represents a step toward environmental justice for residents of the Little Village community," Raoul said. "In addition to requiring the companies to prevent this from happening again during remaining demolition activities, they will provide funding to improve health outcomes in a community that has experienced decades of pollution during the Crawford Electric Generating Station's lifetime."

Raoul's lawsuit was based on a referral from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

"Illinois EPA referred this incident to the Attorney General's office to ensure the responsible parties were held accountable, and the impacts of their actions were addressed appropriately," said Illinois EPA Director John J. Kim. "The consent order will serve as a deterrent to this unacceptable practice and seeks to recognize the impact upon nearby citizens."

Like many other coal-fired power plants, the Crawford Power Generating Station emitted mercury, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter and other pollutants through its smokestack over the course of its decades in operation. As a result of the April 11 demolition, the smokestack crashed to the ground, creating a massive dust cloud of particulate matter that was relatively unaffected by water mitigation efforts. Raoul has alleged the enormous dust cloud blanketed an area of the Little Village neighborhood at a time when Chicago residents were ordered to stay at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a severe respiratory illness.

Particulate matter is comprised of dust, dirt, soot or smoke mixed with liquid droplets found in the air. If inhaled, particulate matter can cause serious health problems, including aggravated asthma, decreased lung function and increased respiratory symptoms. Residents near the site reported experiencing respiratory distress and pain while breathing, as well as heightened fear and anxiety after the smokestack fell. In addition to requiring the companies to comply with dust mitigation plans during remaining demolition activities at the site, Raoul's settlement also requires the companies to provide grant funding to ACCESS Community Health Network (ACCESS) to go toward improving health outcomes in the Little Village community.

The Crawford Power Generating Station is located in an area designated by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency as an area of environmental justice concern. Communities in Illinois with a percentage of low-income and/or minority residents that is greater than twice the statewide average can be designated as areas of environmental justice concern by the IEPA. Raoul's settlement requires the defendants to pay \$370,000 to help fund ACCESS' Little Village Community Health and Wellness Program. The program will focus on addressing some of the leading health concerns facing Little Village residents, including asthma, diabetes and hypertension, by educating and empowering people to manage their physical and mental health.

In the days and weeks following the smokestack demolition, the companies hired contractors to perform cleanup of the surrounding neighborhood. The settlement requires the companies to comply with environmental laws when carrying out any remaining demolition at the site.

Supervising Attorney Gerald Karr and Assistant Attorney General Daniel Rottenberg handled the case for Raoul's Environmental Enforcement Division.

This [press release is available in Spanish here](#).