

EPA Finalizes Clean Air Act Permit for Limetree Bay

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Limetree Bay main offices on St. Croix. By. VI CONSORTIUM

The Environmental Protection Agency said Thursday that it has finalized its "Clean Air Act Plant-wide Applicability Limit" permit for the Limetree Bay Terminals and the Limetree Bay Refining facility. The finalization came after what the EPA said was a "comprehensive review and evaluation of hundreds of comments received during the public hearing and public comment period." The final permit was issued along with a response to comments received from the public.

“This permit includes protections, pollution limits and monitoring requirements that safeguard the environment and public health,” said EPA Regional Administrator Pete Lopez. “After carefully considering all comments submitted to EPA, we consider that this permit will provide appropriate environmental protection, while allowing for economic growth in the territory.”

According to the EPA release, a plant-wide applicability limit is an annual emission limit for a pollutant that applies facility -wide and is enforceable as a practical matter. As long as the facility complies with the plant-wide applicability limit, it has the flexibility to make changes in operation or equipment without triggering major new source review permitting requirements and without the need for project-by-project new source review applicability analysis.

The EPA said the permit establishes seven pollutant-specific, plant-wide emission limitations for the facility. Comprehensive unit-specific emissions monitoring, record-keeping and reporting are required to ensure compliance with permit limits. Ambient air monitoring for three pollutants is also required in locations near the facility to help protect public health.

The EPA described the Limetree Bay Terminals and Limetree Bay Refining facility as a "complex, integrated petroleum refinery, consisting of refinery process units and various supporting operations including sulfur recovery plants, steam and electric power generation via boilers and gas turbine cogeneration units, wastewater treatment, and a marine terminal." The facility, a longtime employer in the territory, has historically been capable of receiving and processing many types of crude oil from all over the world.

The EPA said it held an informal public information session on November 7, 2019 and a formal public hearing on November 8, 2019. The agency also accepted written comments on the "Draft EPA Clean Air Act Plant-wide Applicability Limit" permit for Limetree Bay Terminal and Limetree Bay Refining. As a result of the comments, the EPA said made adjustments to the permit. A comprehensive response to comments is included with EPA's final permit. The permit and the agency's response to comments can be viewed [here](#).