

Cook County, Illinois Judge Consolidates Sterigenics lawsuits filed on the heels of CDC Report

Judge consolidates 19 lawsuits filed against Sterigenics for the Company's emissions of ethylene oxide, a cancer-causing agent, into the air in Willowbrook, IL

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, COOK, February 7, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The aftereffects of the decades-long emission of a toxic, cancer-causing gas reverberate in Willowbrook, Illinois and surrounding communities. Sterigenics, a medical sterilization company, used ethylene oxide (EtO), a mutagenic, cancer-causing agent to sterilize medical devices and emitted massive amounts of the invisible, odorless carcinogen into the air, without warning residents of the health risks.

While the Willowbrook location was closed in 2019, a recent report released on November 17, 2023 by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) revealed that people living or working within a one-mile radius of the Willowbrook plant while it was operating face an increased lifetime risk of developing cancer. In addition, the report indicated that young children may be particularly susceptible to adverse health effects from EtO exposure. The report was released along with formal statements by U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), founder of the Senate Environmental Justice Caucus, U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), a member of the Senate Environmental Caucus, and U.S. Representative Brad Schneider (D-IL-10), Co-Chair of the bipartisan Congressional Ethylene Oxide Task Force:

"It is deeply upsetting that EtO emissions from the Sterigenics facility have led to potentially life-threatening consequences for the residents of Willowbrook. Those who lived nearby and worked at Sterigenics during its operations are now burdened with an increased risk of cancer. Every effort possible should be made by Sterigenics, EPA and the Illinois Department of Public Health to help those at risk monitor their health and access necessary treatment," the lawmakers said. "While we are certainly relieved that EtO emissions are no longer lingering in Willowbrook and that residents are not facing continuing risk, this situation must not happen again – in Illinois or anywhere else in this country. EPA must take its mission seriously to protect Americans from environmental threats and hold companies like Sterigenics accountable when the health and safety of residents are jeopardized."

[Holding Sterigenics accountable](#) and compensating plaintiffs for the harm that they have

suffered at the hands of alleged corporate malfeasance is the chief focus of the law firms [Dunn Harrington, LLC](#), and [Passen & Powell](#). The law firms lead the charge with 22 lawsuits filed against the Company, alleging that the Company's emissions of the noxious gas caused health issues including cancer and neurological ailments, among other health impacts.

This week, the 19 cases pending in the Circuit Court of Cook County were consolidated for pretrial and discovery purposes. The consolidated cases are pending as Tamm et al. vs. Sterigenics U.S., LLC et al., Case No, 2023 L 5701. It is expected that the 3 cases currently in Federal Court will be transferred to State Court and consolidated as well.

Colin Dunn, a founding partner of Dunn Harrington remarks,
"It is important that people of the area understand that we are here to support them and to give them access to justice, as our system is designed to allow. What happened to the people of Willowbrook, Illinois and surrounding areas is an example of a corporation placing profits over the health and safety of the community. This catastrophe is not over for the people of the community who have lost loved ones, had to endure ongoing painful treatment, or worry about ongoing cancer risk. We want to make sure that Sterigenics understands that their actions have come at a tremendous cost to human life."

Impacted individuals are encouraged to contact the law firms of Dunn Harrington, LLC (872) 201-3125 or Passen & Powell (312) 527-4500.

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