

# News Release



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Mineral Park, Inc. Agrees to \$1.3 Million Settlement to Resolve Numerous Air Quality Violations in Mohave County**

PHOENIX (May 24, 2012) – The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and Arizona Attorney General's Office announced today that Mineral Park, Inc. (MPI), a subsidiary of Mercator Minerals of Canada, has agreed to a \$1.3 million penalty in a consent judgment to resolve numerous air quality violations that occurred in Mohave County beginning in 2007.

After complaints of excessive dust in April 2009, ADEQ inspectors found that MPI was operating a large copper and molybdenum mine northwest of Kingman without the required permits. ADEQ inspectors observed several pieces of industrial mining equipment in operation, including copper and molybdenum mills, crushing systems, and ore conveyor transport systems.

ADEQ's investigation determined that MPI began construction of the facility about April 2007. Because of the mine's remote location, ADEQ only became aware of MPI's activities after the dust complaints were received.

ADEQ issued a Notice of Violation (NOV) to MPI in July 2009 for constructing and operating the facility without a permit. After requesting and receiving additional information from MPI, ADEQ determined that the violation was more severe and in March 2010, issued a superseding NOV citing the facility for beginning construction and operating a new major source without a permit.

During the course of its investigation, ADEQ also discovered record-keeping violations, violations of hours of operation limitations, malfunctioning pollution controls, and excessive daily use of explosive materials. MPI ultimately remedied the air quality violations, including obtaining an air quality permit, and returned to compliance in July 2011.

"Mineral Park Inc. constructed and operated a mine that can be a major course of air pollution if it doesn't comply with the right permit. These are serious violations," ADEQ Director Henry Darwin said.

"Mining companies need to rigorously comply with state standards to protect the environment and health of our citizens," Attorney General Tom Horne said. "That obviously was not done in this case."

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According to its website, Mineral Park Mine is one of the largest milling operations of copper and molybdenum in North America with an estimated production life of 23 years. MPI also operates a solvent extraction/electro-winning system for copper extraction at the Mineral Park Mine site.

The consent judgment is subject to court approval.