

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **Petition Filed In Court For Air Quality Board To Halt Pulp Mill Pollution**

(Eureka, CA) A Petition For Writ Of Mandate was filed Friday in the Humboldt Superior Court seeking reversal of a July 15, 2005 decision by the North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District Hearing Board allowing Evergreen Pulp Inc. to continue operations while emitting excessive pollutants.

Evergreen, also known as the Samoa Pulp Mill, is the last operating pulp mill in California. Notorious for being out of compliance with health and safety regulations, the mill has an extensive history of violations, fines, and granted variances stretching standards set related to toxic emissions.

Elizabeth Eytchison, a member of the Citizens Pulp Mill Committee, lives with her family in the 'danger zone' identified by a 1991 Louisiana Pacific Health Risk Assessment for the mill, the last such conducted study. Last month, the Air Quality Board granted Evergreen a 'variance' allowing the pulp mill, located on the Samoa Peninsula, to bypass air control regulations and release normally prohibited levels of pollutants into the air. The variance, permitted until December, was further extended until the end of February. Eytchison is one of many local residents who oppose the operation of the mill until it cleans up its act.

Eytchison participated in the 10-hour 'public' hearing regarding Evergreen's request for the variance. At the hearing, district staff, the technical inspection team hired by the staff to investigate the mill, and many members of the public gave strong testimony to the negligent and harmful conditions of the mill that create hazardous emissions and pose dangerous threats to public health. Evergreen argued economic hardship and presented engineering arguments which experts from the technical investigating team who evaluate mills all over the world seemed to find absurd and irrelevant. Eytchison's petition asserts that the Air Quality Board, the decision-making body at the hearing, made incorrect findings to grant the variance, violating Health and Safety Code section 42352. Furthermore, Eytchison said "The Board showed a lack of concern for the health of affected community residents absent or present at the hearing."

According to Evergreen's own statement, the variance allows them to emit 37.10 additional tons of health-damaging particulates, microscopic pieces of heavy metals such as lead, arsenic, and mercury and carcinogenic chemicals and fungi that can become lodged in the lungs. Particulate is a catch-all term. No one knows exactly what those additional 37.10 tons contain because Evergreen refuses to do necessary testing. Dangerous health effects of released particulates can include: systemic

toxic effects, allergic and hypersensitivity reactions, irritation of the mucous membranes of the nose and throat, bacterial and fungal reactions, and cancer.

In addition, mill operations emit carbon monoxide, methanol, sulfur dioxide, and other compounds and substances identified as hazardous by California law and the Federal Environmental Protection Agency. Typical mill pollutants have historically caused developmental problems, adverse psychological reactions, cancer, birth defects, and lung disease. Scientific monitoring of Evergreen's specific and excessive emissions and their effects is not being performed. The 40 year-old mill, a community health hazard and public nuisance, is a great cause for worry in Humboldt County, which has an extraordinary cancer rate.

The variance challenged by Eytchison's petition pertains to pollution from only one piece of Evergreen's equipment, the Smelt Dissolver Scrubber. However, the entire mill and various pieces of the mill's key equipment have had similar malfunction and leak problems over the past 10 years. At the variance hearing, the investigating technical team showed photos of the mill's shoddy and unsafe equipment.

The Citizens Pulp Mill Committee was organized by residents of Eureka's west side living in the vicinity of the mill. The Committee demands that the mill be made safe through installation of state-of-the-art pollution control equipment, scientific source and ambient monitoring and spectrographic analysis, or be shut down. The Committee, joined by other members of the public, protests the mill and distributes information every Thurs. from 5-6pm in front of the Eureka Courthouse.

Citizens Pulp Mill Committee: (707) 443-7926, 268-1385, 441-0702 Air Quality Complaints: (707) 443-3093 and 1-800-952-5588

[See Superior Court Case# CV-050604, Eytchison v. No.Coast Unified Air Quality Mgmt. Dist. Hearing Bd., Evergreen Pulp Inc. & Does 1-100 ]