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**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL ANNOUNCES INTERIM ORDER WITH SUGAR CAMP ENERGY, LLC
OVER MISUSE OF TOXIC "FOREVER CHEMICALS"**

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced an interim consent order with Sugar Camp Energy LLC (Sugar Camp) over an alleged release of dangerous "forever chemicals" from a mine in Southern Illinois.

[The order](#) stems from a lawsuit Raoul filed against Sugar Camp earlier this year that alleges Sugar Camp used firefighting foams containing per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) – also known as "forever chemicals" for their persistence in the environment – in an attempt to extinguish an underground fire at the Sugar Camp mine, a coal mining operation located near Macedonia, Illinois. PFAS were subsequently discharged into waters near the coal mine.

"Sugar Camp jeopardized public safety and irresponsibly violated state environmental statutes by misusing dangerous 'forever chemicals,'" Raoul said. "Exposure to such chemicals can cause long-lasting damage to the environment and poses a serious risk to public health. This order is an important first step toward ensuring that Sugar Camp is held accountable for the damage it has done by using these chemicals."

Under the order, Sugar Camp is required to test the facility's ponds for PFAS and to install new treatment systems to remove PFAS from the facility's wastewater. The order restricts Sugar Camp's transfer or discharge of water from ponds contaminated with PFAS and requires Sugar Camp to test discharged wastewater for PFAS. The state reserves the right to seek additional remedial actions by Sugar Camp beyond this interim order.

PFAS are human-made, synthetic chemicals that do not exist naturally in the environment. PFAS are highly toxic to humans and animals, and they are extremely resistant to degradation in the environment, which is why PFAS are known as "forever chemicals."

PFAS contaminants may be linked to serious adverse health effects in humans and animals, including increased serum cholesterol, immune dysregulation, pregnancy-induced hypertension, and kidney and testicular cancers. Exposure to certain types of PFAS is also associated with low birth weight, suppressed immune system response, dyslipidemia, impaired kidney function and delayed onset of menstruation.

In 2016, Sugar Camp was issued a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit that authorized the company to discharge wastewater from specified outfalls at its mining facility, subject to limitations. The NPDES permit does not authorize Sugar Camp to discharge PFAS. The facility operates a network of pumps and pipelines that pump water from its two longwall mines to prevent underground flooding of the mines. This water is pumped to two slurry impoundments at the facility and is ultimately discharged into nearby waters, including the Middle Fork of the Big Muddy River.

"Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) referred this case to the Attorney General's Office following the inappropriate handling of aqueous firefighting foam (AFFF) by Sugar Camp Energy, LLC," said IEPA Director John J. Kim. "The Agreed Interim Order provides immediate relief related to the contamination caused by PFAS chemicals in the AFFF, including a requirement that the company conduct sampling and treatment of PFAS chemicals to prevent further damage to the environment and Illinois waters."

After the underground fire broke out in August 2021, the IEPA received a citizen complaint regarding firefighting foam being discovered in a farm field ditch and a tributary to Akin Creek, which is located near

the facility. The IEPA conducted an inspection and found evidence of the firefighting foam in the tributary to Akin Creek and in other nearby areas. Raoul's lawsuit alleges that laboratory analysis of water samples revealed the presence of PFAS in the water. Subsequent sampling done by Sugar Camp further revealed the presence of PFAS in the facility's impoundments and in permitted outfalls.

Bureau Chief Andrew Armstrong and Assistant Attorney General Kevin Bonin are handling the case for Raoul's Environmental Bureau.