

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**  
Department of Environmental Protection  
Southeast Regional Office  
2 East Main Street  
Norristown, PA 19401-4915

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**DEP INVESTIGATES INCIDENT AT SUPERIOR TUBE**  
*Degreaser Malfunction Results in TCE Release; No Reports of Odors in Community*

**NORRISTOWN** — The Department of Environmental Protection conducted an initial investigation at the Superior Tube Company in Norristown after the company reported that a malfunction in a vapor degreaser had occurred just before 4 p.m. on July 10.

“DEP inspectors visited the facility on Thursday and confirmed that the degreaser is now working properly,” Southeast Regional Director Joseph A. Feola said. “Upon reviewing a detailed report of the incident from Superior Tube, we will work with the company to prevent such an incident from occurring in the future.”

The degreaser is equipped with a cooling system, which allows chilled vapor to act as a barrier on top of the heated trichloroethylene (TCE) gas within the degreaser unit. When a compressor malfunctioned, the barrier was lost, allowing more than 100 pounds of TCE gas to escape.

Superior Tube reported that odors were detected inside the plant at 5:15 p.m. There were no reports of odors detected in the surrounding community.

The company continues to investigate the incident. DEP will review the complete report once received within 14 days.

Superior Tube currently holds a facility-wide air permit that limits TCE emissions from this degreaser unit to 15 lbs. an hour. The facility emits approximately 70 tons — or 140,000 pounds of TCE a year.

DEP is accepting public comments through Sept. 7 on Superior Tube's proposal to reduce TCE emissions by 7.4 tons per year, representing an 8 percent reduction in TCE emissions. The company is working to implement another project involving the reformulation of production material. The reformulation is expected to result in a 22 percent reduction in TCE emissions.

Combined, both projects should produce a 30 percent decrease in TCE emissions this year. Superior Tube has committed to continue its voluntary emission reduction efforts, planning to reduce TCE emissions by another 30 percent in the next few years.

Area residents and interested parties can mail written comments to DEP Air Quality Program Manager Francine Carlini at 2 East Main St., Norristown, PA 19401, or send comments via e-mail to: [fcarlini@state.pa.us](mailto:fcarlini@state.pa.us).

Parties may also present oral comments at a public hearing on proposed changes to Superior Tube Company's air permit at 7 p.m., on Wednesday, Aug. 8, at the Perkiomen Valley Middle School East auditorium, 100 Kagey Road, Collegeville.

Those wishing to present testimony at the hearing should contact DEP Community Relations Coordinator Lynda Rebarchak at (484) 250-5820 to register.

An electronic version of Superior's permit is available on at [www.depweb.state.pa.us](http://www.depweb.state.pa.us), keyword: Collegeville. Information on potential health impacts of TCE can be found on the Agency for Substance and Disease Registry Web site at [www.atsdr.cdc.gov](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov).

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