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# Air Pollution Precaution

The Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County (EPC) is issuing an Air Pollution PRECAUTION due to elevated levels of **lead (Pb)** in the vicinity of the Gopher Resources Inc./EnviroFocus battery recycling plant, located at 6505 Jewel Avenue, Tampa, FL. This precautionary statement is effective **immediately**, today, **February 18, 2022**. Unlike other air pollutants that are gaseous and can temporarily irritate lung tissue, lead emissions can be ingested and settle within the body, having a toxic effect on both humans and animals. Recently analyzed lead data from EPC monitors around the plant show that on January 7, 2022, lead concentrations were 0.866 ug/m<sup>3</sup>; and on January 29, 2022, the concentrations were 0.293 ug/m<sup>3</sup>. This results in a monthly average lead concentration of 0.156 ug/m<sup>3</sup>. On average, the national ambient air quality standard established to protect public health is 0.15 ug/m<sup>3</sup> when averaged over three consecutive months. When the most recent January data is included, the average three-month average concentration for lead is 0.12 ug/m<sup>3</sup>. Currently, the three-month average has not been exceeded. EPC only recently learned of the high values as a result of the required laboratory time needed to analyze the air samples and has notified the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

In 2021, EPC staff initiated enforcement actions against Gopher Resources for air quality deficiencies within the plant. EPC has also increased its monitoring by adding random air sampling days to the required federal sampling schedule.

Due to the elevated levels on the referenced days, EPC is advising individuals to consider reducing prolonged outside activities in the vicinity of the plant. **This alert remains in effect until further notice.**

If you have any questions or need further information, please call EPC's Air Division Director, Reginald Sanford, at (813) 627-2600, ext. 1254.

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