



Punjab Pollution Control Board

Vatavaran Bhawan, Nabha Road, Patiala

Phone no.0175-2302392

No. 298

Dated: 9/4/2018

Directions for Restricting the Firing Period of Brick Kilns.

There are about 3000 brick kilns in the State of Punjab manufacturing on an average about 70 to 80 lacs bricks per year per brick kiln and coal @ 15 Ton per lac of bricks on an average, is used as fuel. The burning of coal in the kiln generates air emissions containing particulate matter and carbon dioxide / carbon monoxide / oxides of sulphur etc.

And whereas, Punjab Pollution Control Board vide its notification no. Admn.A-2/F No.178/98/3 dated 2.9.1998 had notified emission standards for brick kilns, according to which the brick kilns are required to comply with the emission standards of 750 mg/Nm³ of particulate matter. With this prescribed emission standard of 750 mg/Nm³ or even lower level of emissions, the total pollution load going into the atmosphere becomes too large. About 40 percent of the brick kilns start firing the kilns in the month of October-December i.e. after the rainy season. Ambient air quality in Punjab worsens during the winter period due to following main reasons:

- i. Due to stubble burning in the open fields after the paddy harvesting.
- ii. Due to the bursting of fire crackers during festivals in these days including Dushhera, Diwali, Gurupurb, Marriage functions etc.
- iii. Due to emitting of dust in the fields due to harvesting of crop and in the grain markets due to paddy cleaning operations for its procurement.
- iv. Poor dispersion of dust particles in the ambient air due to fall in temperature, rise in humidity and reduced wind speed etc.

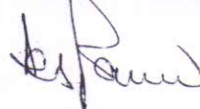
- v. Poor precipitation leading to dust becoming air borne as well as low level of settling of suspended particulate matter.
- vi. Increased quantity of coal consumption (@ 14-15 T/thousand bricks) in winter months as compared to summer months (@ 11-12 T/thousand bricks) leading to increased quantum of emissions in the air during the winter months.

And whereas, as per the ambient air quality monitoring being carried out by the Board through continuous ambient air quality monitoring stations installed at various places, the average Air Quality Index (AQI) in the State during these winter months falls in very poor zone. The level of emission of PM₁₀ particles crosses 300 µg/Nm³ on many occasions during this period. The air quality in this zone can adversely affect flora, fauna and humans.

And whereas, notice to issue directions 31-A of the Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 was issued through leading newspapers on 14.12.2017 to all the stake holders / general Public / Brick Kiln owners / individuals that the brick kilns shall be allowed to fire the brick kilns only from 1st of February to 30th of September to improve the ambient air quality in the State during the winter months and they were asked to file objections / suggestions, if any, within one month from the date of issuance of that notice, as to why the proposed directions, as aforesaid, should not be issued.

And whereas, the subject matter of Air Pollution in NCR Delhi was considered by the Ld. National Green Tribunal in Original Application No. 21 of 2014 titled as Vardhman Kaushik v/s Union of India and Others and the orders passed therein have been made mutatis mutandi applicable in the State of Punjab also.

And whereas, Original Application No. 21 of 2014 titled as Vardhman Kaushik v/s Union of India and Others was disposed of by the Ld. National Green Tribunal vide Judgment dated 18.12.2017, wherein one of the directions provides that when the concentration of PM₁₀ reaches beyond 300 µg/Nm³, following measures inter-alia shall be taken to control the Air Pollution:



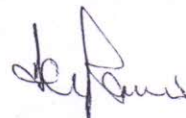
(11)

"All the brick kilns, thermal plants and heavy industries which are causing emissions would be instantaneously stopped and inspected by Pollution Control Board and all other concerned authorities and if their emissions are found to be beyond the prescribed standards, such plants shall be directed to be shut down."

And whereas, the matter was placed before the Board in its 178th meeting held on 17.1.2018, wherein after deliberating over the issue and considering the fact that most of the brick kilns remain non-operational during the months of October to January due to cold conditions in the State, the Board decided to issue the proposed directions for restricting the firing period of the brick kilns from 1st of February to 30th of September for one year in the first instance and to review the same after the said period of one year.

And whereas, the matter was also placed before the Core Committee meeting of the Board officers held on 19.3.2018 and after detailed deliberations, it was decided that in order to comply with the judgment dated 18.12.2017 of the Ld. National Green Tribunal passed in Original Application No. 21 of 2014 titled as Vardhman Kaushik v/s Union of India and Others and also keeping in view the fact that most of the brick kilns remain non-operational during the months of October to January, the Board should issue directions under section 31-A of the Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 for closure of all brick kilns in the State during the period from 1st of October, 2018 to 31st of January, 2019, so as to improve the quality of air in the State. The decision with regard to subsequent years shall be taken after observing the impact of the directions and improvement in the quality of air during the aforesaid period of closure of brick kilns in the State.

And whereas, the Board has convened several meetings with the State Level Brick Kiln Associations and the Brick Kiln Associations informed the



Board that there will be ample stock of bricks with them and assured that there will not be any problem in the supply of the bricks for meeting the public demand, in case the brick kilns do not operate during the winter months from October to January. (12)

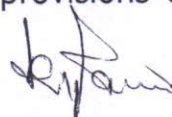
And whereas, all the objections / suggestions received in response to the notice issued for proposed directions u/s 31-A of Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 have been considered, along with the decision taken by the Board in its 178th meeting held on 17.1.2018 and the decision of the Core Committee of the Officers of the Board held on 19.3.2018.

Now, therefore, keeping in view the entire facts and circumstances of the case and taking into consideration the worsening Air Quality Index during the period from October to December in the State, I, Kahan Singh Pannu, IAS, Chairman, Punjab Pollution Control Board in exercise of the powers conferred u/s 31-A of the Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 hereby issue the following directions to all the Brick Kiln owners operating their brick kilns in the State of Punjab for a period of one year in the first instance:


1) That all the Brick Kiln Owners operating their Brick Kilns in the State of Punjab shall restrict the firing period in the brick kilns from 1st of February to 30th of September to improve the ambient air quality in the State during the winter months.

2) That the brick kilns in the State of Punjab shall not operate for the period from 1st of October, 2018 to 31st of January, 2019.

Any Brick Kiln owner found violating the above said directions shall be liable for legal action under the provisions of the Air (Prevention &



Control of Pollution) Act, 1981. However, the above directions shall be reviewed (13)
after a period of one year on the basis of field reports received with regard to
the impact of the directions on the Air Quality Index of the State. A copy of
these directions be supplied to all the brick kilns operating in the State of Punjab
and all the offices of the Board for effective implementation.



(Kahan Singh Pannu, IAS)
Chairman