MS DEQ Denies Permit to Drax Biomass, Cites History of Violations

The wood pellet industry has a troubling history of [violating emissions standards](). Residents living near wood pellet production facilities have frequently voiced concerns about the levels of air and noise pollution in their communities.

In April of 2025, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MS DEQ) denied a permit application submitted by Drax Amite BioEnergy. Drax wanted to raise pollution levels at the facility. The [MS DEQ Permit Board denied Drax's application]() to become a "major" source of Hazardous Air Pollutants, or HAPs.

The new permit would have allowed Drax Amite BioEnergy to release more potentially harmful air pollutants than what is currently allowed under state regulation. This site has already been fined for pollution violations several times.

MS DEQ denied the permit for 2 reasons:
- The company's past violations and compliance issues. This site has already been fined for pollution violations several times.
- The likelihood that Drax would likely exceed pollution limits again, even with the new permit.

Other wood pellet companies, like Enviva and Fram, also have a [long list of past violations and compliance issues.]() These violations put local residents at high risk from harmful pollutants like formaldehyde, carbon monoxide, and methanol.

Drax will likely appeal this decision, and attempt to re-apply for this permit.

Drax is the world's largest importer of wood pellets, burning over 8M tons per year at its power station in the UK. Drax buys wood pellets from Enviva, as well as producing wood pellets at Drax owned and operated facilities. They face logging and pollution controversies wherever they work. A Land & Climate Review investigation found that [the company broke environmental rules 11,378 times]() in the US since 2014.

Media Links:
- https://www.mpbonline.org/blogs/news/the-mississippi-department-of-environmental-quality-denies-new-permits-for-drax-plant-in-gloster/
- https://mississippitoday.org/2025/04/08/state-denies-drax-ability-to-expand-emissions/