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## **ADEQ Proposes to Issue Air Quality Permit for Rosemont Copper Mine in Pima County**

*State Permit Would Hold Mine Operator to Rigorous Environmental Standards*

PHOENIX (Aug. 3, 2012) – The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality announced Friday that it is proposing to issue a comprehensive air quality permit to Rosemont Copper Company for operation of its planned open pit copper mine 30 miles southeast of Tucson.

“Pima County Superior Court ruled last month that the Pima County Department of Environmental Quality acted in an arbitrary and capricious manner and abused its discretion in denying Rosemont’s application for an air quality permit,” ADEQ Director Henry Darwin said. “Our assertion of jurisdiction will ensure regulatory certainty and enhanced environmental protection.”

ADEQ’s air quality permit will ensure that Rosemont meets all federal, state and local requirements by operating with enhanced emissions controls at the mine site. The ADEQ permit also has more environmental protection than the permit that PDEQ proposed last August, but ultimately denied on Sept. 29, 2011. ADEQ’s permit reduces emissions of course dust particles by 47 tons and fine dust particles by 43 tons.

Among the controls required by the proposed State permit are state-of-the-art cartridge filters to reduce dust emissions from mine processing equipment and redesign of the primary crushing and lime systems to reduce dust emissions. Additionally, ADEQ will mandate the use of new, lower-polluting engines in on-site vehicles as well as require that 3.1 miles of roadway within the property be paved.

The public comment period will start Monday, Aug. 6 and end on Oct. 9. A public meeting will be held in mid-September at a time and location to be posted on ADEQ’s Web site [www.azdeq.gov](http://www.azdeq.gov). Another public hearing will be held on Oct. 9 at 6 p.m. in the community of Vail at Sycamore Elementary School, 16701 S. Houghton Road. ADEQ also proposes to offer oversight of the mine’s day-to-day operations to Pima County Department of Environmental Quality.

In April 2012, ADEQ issued an aquifer protection permit to Rosemont for the proposed mine’s discharging facilities. But the mining company still needs several other permits before it can begin operations, including a multi-sector general permit for stormwater control.

The U.S. Forest Service has already issued a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Rosemont. Public comment on that document ended in January 2011. Issuance of a final EIS is expected by the end of this year. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is currently reviewing Rosemont's application for a Clean Water Act 404 (dredge and fill) permit. ADEQ must review the 404 permit application to ensure that the proposed actions will comply with State water quality standards.