

July 28, 2009 -- Residents of a rural neighborhood near Fallon lost a round Tuesday in their long battle against an oil recycling plant they claim is making their lives miserable.

A panel of the state Environmental Commission turned down their appeal of a decision by the Environmental Protection Division allowing Bango Oil to more than double the capacity of its plant.

The residents worry emissions from the plant may have long term health effects, but their primary concern are noxious odors they say frequently envelops their homes. They argue allowing the plant to expand its operation will only make things worse.

They filed an appeal to the state division's decision earlier this year to allow the expansion. A hearing on their appeal in April was continued after commissioners said they needed more time to study the matter.

At the completion of the hearing this morning, the three commissioners were persuaded by the division's arguments that its decision allowing the expansion met all requirements of state law.

The residents did accomplish something with their appeal. All three commissioners stated they believe there is an odor problem in the neighborhood and, SEC chairman Alan Coyner and commissioner Jim Gans, said they believe the source is Bango Oil.

Coyner said he was sympathetic to the neighbors' plight saying there was nothing more sacred than being able to enjoy life in one's own home and he suggested though the division may have followed current law, the state's regulations concerning problem odors may be due for a reexamination. He suggested the residents might want to take part in that process and he noted their efforts might be better focused on the plant's annual licensing hearing in two months.

Bango Oil spokesman Tom Clark said the company also wants to work to identify the source of the odor, but again insisted it wasn't coming from the plant.

The company is also facing a show cause hearing before county officials later this year which could see revocation of their special use permit.

Source: KOLO TV Reno <http://www.kolotv.com/news/headlines/51926927.html#>