

ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL LISA MADIGAN

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**ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN, BOONE COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY SEEK
ANSWERS TO EXPLOSION AT BELVIDERE CHEMICAL PLANT**

***Requests that Company Conduct Thorough Analysis to Determine Cause of
December 7 Incident***

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan and Boone County State's Attorney Michelle Courier today filed a two-count complaint alleging environmental violations against NDK Crystal, Inc., following the December 7, 2009, explosion at its Belvidere manufacturing facility. The blast sent quartz particles, chemicals and debris across Interstate 90, killing a man at a nearby tollway oasis.

Along with filing the complaint, Attorney General Madigan and State's Attorney Courier filed a motion seeking an immediate injunction to prevent NDK from resuming operations until a root cause analysis is conducted to ascertain why the explosion occurred and identify the steps necessary to prevent it from occurring again.

"The force of this explosion had tragic consequences for an innocent bystander and resulted in the release of several potentially hazardous materials. Before we can ensure that the plant can be operated safely in the future, we must know why the explosion happened," Madigan said.

"With this lawsuit, we hope to address and remedy any health and safety concerns from the blast as well as prevent similar tragedies from occurring," said State's Attorney Courier.

NDK manufactures quartz crystals used in computers, telephones, liquid crystal displays and other electronics. The crystals are formed in an enclosed pressurized vessel known as an autoclave. NDK operates eight autoclaves at the site located at 701 Crystal Parkway and U.S. 20.

According to the complaint, the explosion resulted in the sudden release of various chemicals, including highly corrosive sodium hydroxide, also known as "caustic soda." Industry safety information indicates that contact with caustic soda may cause burns to the respiratory tract, skin and eyes. Contact with the quartz particles can trigger serious respiratory ailments. The motion for immediate injunction asks the Court to order NDK to identify and quantify all of the chemicals emitted as a result of the explosion and to account for all of the chemicals that remain at the damaged facility. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) referred the case to Madigan's office on December 22.

Assistant Attorneys General Andrew Nicholas and Christopher Grant are handling the case for Madigan's Environmental Bureau along with Boone County State's Attorney Courier's Office.