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Ohio Air Quality Development Authority Closes on \$100,000 in Bond Financing to Support Youngstown Dry Cleaning Business

LaFrance Cleaners to invest in environmentally conscious upgrades

Columbus, OH – (December 1, 2020) – The Ohio Air Quality Development Authority (OAQDA) is pleased to announce that it has closed on \$100,000 in bond financing to support LaFrance Cleaners in Mahoning County. The bond financing, along with a \$20,000 grant from the Authority, was provided through the Authority’s Clean Air Resource Center (CARC), which makes clean air compliance easily accessible and affordable for Ohio small businesses.

LaFrance Cleaners is a third-generation dry-cleaning business in Youngstown, Ohio, with a central production facility, two stores and seven pick-up and delivery routes. The small business will receive up to \$100,000 in lender financing as well as a \$20,000 grant from the Authority to replace aging dry-cleaning equipment, which will eliminate the use of perchloroethylene (PERC), a known carcinogen. It also will allow the use of new, more environmentally conscious solvents.

“LaFrance Cleaners is making an important investment to improve its operations and promote a healthier environment, and we applaud their commitment to taking the right steps to improve air quality,” said Christina O’Keeffe, executive director of OAQDA. “We are committed to supporting Ohio small businesses, like LaFrance Cleaners, that want to exceed the current standards of the Clean Air Act.”

The equipment replacement will allow LaFrance to continue to service its customers while providing a safer environment for its employees.

“I want to thank the OAQDA for making it possible for us to upgrade our technology to eliminate the use of PERC at our dry-cleaning plant,” said Stephen Weiss, owner of LaFrance Cleaners. “They were easy to work with and helped us throughout the application process.”

OAQDA is committed to serving the economic and environmental needs of Ohio businesses and communities as they strive to reduce air emissions and achieve greater sustainability goals that protects the air. CARC offers financing packages that are structured to suit the needs of individual projects, which

are incentivized with tax benefits using conduit bonds and grants to help small businesses cover a portion of the principal amount.

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***The Ohio Air Quality Development Authority (OAQDA)** is a non-regulatory government agency created to help Ohio businesses comply with and go beyond clean air regulations. Since its creation in 1970, OAQDA has worked to prevent air pollution throughout the state of Ohio by providing businesses with the resources they need to reduce harmful air emissions and be more energy efficient while creating jobs and boosting local economies. To date, OAQDA has awarded more than \$8 billion to finance air quality projects. For more information about OAQDA and its services, please visit ohioairquality.org.*