

**STATE OF LOUISIANA**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

**QUALITY TESTING, INC.**

**AI # 227984**

**PROCEEDINGS UNDER THE LOUISIANA  
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT  
LA. R.S. 30:2001, ET SEQ.**

\* **Settlement Tracking No.**  
\* **SA-MM-23-0083**  
\*  
\* **Enforcement Tracking No.**  
\* **MM-CN-21-00486**  
\*  
\*  
\* **Docket No. 2023-0689-DEQ**  
\*

**SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT**

The following Settlement Agreement is hereby agreed to between Quality Testing, Inc. (“Respondent”) and the Department of Environmental Quality (“DEQ” or “the Department”), under authority granted by the Louisiana Environmental Quality Act, La. R.S. 30:2001, et seq. (“the Act”).

**I**

Respondent is a corporation that owns and/or operates an industrial machine/equipment testing facility located in Baton Rouge, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana (“the Facility”).

**II**

On October 14, 2021, the Department issued to Respondent a Consolidated Compliance Order & Notice of Potential Penalty, Enforcement Tracking No. MM-CN-21-00486 (Exhibit 1).

**III**

In response to the Consolidated Compliance Order & Notice of Potential Penalty, Respondent made a timely request for a hearing.

**IV**

Respondent denies it committed any violations or that it is liable for any fines, forfeitures

and/or penalties.

V

Nonetheless, Respondent, without making any admission of liability under state or federal statute or regulation, agrees to pay, and the Department agrees to accept, a payment in the amount of SEVEN THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED AND NO/100 DOLLARS (\$7,200.00), of which One Thousand Six Hundred Fifty-Nine and 25/100 Dollars (\$1,659.25) represents the Department's enforcement costs, in settlement of the claims set forth in this Settlement Agreement. The total amount of money expended by Respondent on cash payments to the Department as described above, shall be considered a civil penalty for tax purposes, as required by La. R.S. 30:2050.7(E)(1).

VI

Respondent further agrees that the Department may consider the inspection report(s), permit record(s), the Consolidated Compliance Order & Notice of Potential Penalty and this Settlement Agreement for the purpose of determining compliance history in connection with any future enforcement or permitting action by the Department against Respondent, and in any such action Respondent shall be estopped from objecting to the above-referenced documents being considered as proving the violations alleged herein for the sole purpose of determining Respondent's compliance history.

VII

This Settlement Agreement shall be considered a final order of the Secretary for all purposes, including, but not limited to, enforcement under La. R.S. 30:2025(G)(2), and Respondent hereby waives any right to administrative or judicial review of the terms of this agreement, except such review as may be required for interpretation of this Settlement Agreement in any action by the Department to enforce this Settlement Agreement.

VIII

This Settlement Agreement is being made in the interest of settling the state's claims and avoiding for both parties the expense and effort involved in litigation or an adjudicatory hearing. In agreeing to the compromise and Settlement Agreement, the Department considered the factors for issuing civil penalties set forth in La. R. S. 30:2025(E) of the Act.

IX

As required by law, the Department has submitted this Settlement Agreement to the Louisiana Attorney General for approval or rejection. The Attorney General's concurrence is appended to this Settlement Agreement.

X

The Respondent has caused a public notice advertisement to be placed in the official journal of the parish governing authority in East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana. The advertisement, in form and wording approved by the Department, announced the availability of this Settlement Agreement for public view and comment and the opportunity for a public hearing. Respondent has submitted an original proof-of-publication affidavit and an original public notice to the Department and, as of the date this Settlement Agreement is executed on behalf of the Department, more than forty-five (45) days have elapsed since publication of the notice.

XI

Payment is to be made within thirty (30) days from notice of the Secretary's signature. If payment is not received within that time, this Settlement Agreement is voidable at the option of the Department. Payments are to be made by check, payable to the Department of Environmental Quality, and mailed or delivered to the attention of Accountant Administrator, Financial Services Division, Department of Environmental Quality, Post Office Box 4303, Baton Rouge, Louisiana,

70821-4303. Each payment shall be accompanied by a completed Settlement Payment Form attached hereto.

XII

In consideration of the above, any claims for penalties are hereby compromised and settled in accordance with the terms of this Settlement Agreement.

XIII

Each undersigned representative of the parties certifies that he or she is fully authorized to execute this Settlement Agreement on behalf of his or her respective party, and to legally bind such party to its terms and conditions.

**QUALITY TESTING, INC.**

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed)

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

THUS DONE AND SIGNED in duplicate original before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
NOTARY PUBLIC (ID # \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(stamped or printed)

**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aurelia S. Giacometto, Secretary

THUS DONE AND SIGNED in duplicate original before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_\_, at Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

\_\_\_\_\_  
NOTARY PUBLIC (ID # \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(stamped or printed)

Approved: *Aurelia S. Giacometto*  
Aurelia S. Giacometto, Secretary



JOHN BEL EDWARDS  
GOVERNOR

CHUCK CARR BROWN, Ph.D.  
SECRETARY

**State of Louisiana**  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

OCT 14 2021

CERTIFIED MAIL (7017 3040 0000 2465 1545)  
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

**QUALITY TESTING, INC.**  
c/o Frank C. Traina  
Agent for Service of Process  
588 Rodney Drive  
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

**RE: CONSOLIDATED COMPLIANCE ORDER  
& NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY  
ENFORCEMENT TRACKING NO. MM-CN-21-00486  
AGENCY INTEREST NO. 227984**

Dear Sir:

Pursuant to the Louisiana Environmental Quality Act (La. R.S. 30:2001, et seq.), the attached **CONSOLIDATED COMPLIANCE ORDER & NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY** is hereby served on **QUALITY TESTING, INC. (RESPONDENT)** for the violations described therein.

Compliance is expected within the maximum time period established by each part of the **COMPLIANCE ORDER**. The violations cited in the **CONSOLIDATED COMPLIANCE ORDER & NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY** could result in the issuance of a civil penalty or other appropriate legal actions.

Any questions concerning this action should be directed to Brock Bonvillain at (225) 219-1423 or Brock.Bonvillain@la.gov.

Sincerely,

Angela Marse  
Administrator  
Enforcement Division

AM/BRB/brb/kwf  
Alt ID Nos. LAR000102315; LAU008373  
Attachment



CERTIFIED MAIL (7017 3040 0000 2465 1552)  
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

c: Quality Testing, Inc.  
1832 Wooddale Boulevard  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

**STATE OF LOUISIANA  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE**

<b>IN THE MATTER OF</b>	*	
	*	
<b>QUALITY TESTING, INC. EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH ALT ID NOS. LAR000102315; LAU008373</b>	*	<b>ENFORCEMENT TRACKING NO.  MM-CN-21-00486</b>
	*	
	*	<b>AGENCY INTEREST NO.  227984</b>
<b>PROCEEDINGS UNDER THE LOUISIANA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT, La. R.S. 30:2001, ET SEQ.</b>	*	
	*	

**CONSOLIDATED  
COMPLIANCE ORDER & NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY**

The following **CONSOLIDATED COMPLIANCE ORDER & NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY** is issued to **QUALITY TESTING, INC. (RESPONDENT)** by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (the Department), under the authority granted by the Louisiana Environmental Quality Act (the Act), La. R.S. 30:2001, et seq., and particularly by La. R.S. 30:2025(C), 30:2050.2 and 30:2050.3(B).

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

I.

The Respondent owns and/or operates an industrial machine/equipment testing facility located at 1832 Wooddale Boulevard in Baton Rouge, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana. The facility specializes in the testing of physical properties of metallic materials using industrial band saws, computer numerical control (CNC) milling machines, and test equipment. The Respondent submitted a Notification of Hazardous Waste Activity Form (HW-1) dated August 11, 2021, which is currently under review by the Department. The Respondent does not have a Louisiana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (LPDES) permit or any other authority to discharge pollutants to waters of the state.

II.

On or about March 16, 2021, the Department conducted an inspection and a subsequent file review on or about September 7, 2021 of the above referenced facility to determine the degree of compliance



with the Act and the supporting Regulations. While the investigation by the Department is not yet complete, the following violations were noted during the course of the inspection and subsequent file review:

- A. The Respondent failed to properly label containers storing used oil, in violation of LAC 33:V.4013.D.1. Specifically, a representative of the Respondent stated that substances observed in six (6) 55-gallon drums were used oil; however, the drums were not labeled with the words "Used Oil." On or about July 8, 2021, the Department received correspondence which included photographs revealing the six (6) 55-gallon drums were labeled with the words "Used Oil."
- B. The Respondent caused and/or allowed the discharge of pollutants without a permit and/or other authority from the Department in violation of La. R.S. 30:2075. Specifically, a drainage pipe coming directly from a sink used for handwashing and the dumping of diluted chemicals was observed with evidence of discharge to a storm drain. In addition, a representative of the Respondent stated that TRIM MicroSol 585XT (TRIM), a machine working fluid containing severely hydrotreated petroleum oil and Triethanolamine, was also periodically poured down the same storm drain. Both sources enter the storm drain at the facility, which drains to Jones Creek, thence into Amite River (Subsegment 040302), all waters of the state. On or about July 8, 2021, the Department received correspondence providing evidence that the sink drainage pipe had been tied into the municipal sewer treatment system.
- C. The Respondent failed to determine if solid waste generated at the Respondent's facility was a hazardous waste, in violation of LAC 33:V.1005.A. Specifically, during the March 16, 2021 inspection, the Department documented that the Respondent utilizes several materials (e.g., solvents, acids, etchants, etc.) during metal integrity testing conducted at the Respondent's facility that had the potential to be hazardous wastes when spent/discarded. During the inspection, a representative of the Respondent stated the spent/discarded materials associated with the integrity metals testing have been generated at the facility since commencing operations in 1996. Additionally, a response letter to the inspection, dated March 31, 2021, stated that spent aerosol cans were disposed of in the commercial dumpster for collection and disposal at a non-hazardous solid waste disposal facility. The Respondent did not determine if the

spent/discarded materials or the spent aerosol cans were hazardous wastes before being disposed. Subsequent to the March 16, 2021 inspection, the March 31, 2021 response letter stated that the spent aerosol cans are now treated as a hazard, determined through process of knowledge, and are placed into a covered, closed storage barrel to be collected for off-site disposal. A file review conducted on or about September 7, 2021 revealed the Respondent had not submitted a proper waste determination for the spent/discarded materials associated with the integrity metals testing.

- D. The Respondent failed to obtain an active EPA identification number by notifying the Office of Environmental Services using the Notification of Hazardous Waste Activity Form (HW-1) within fourteen (14) days after first generating any hazardous waste, in violation of LAC 33:V.1017.A. Specifically, during the March 16, 2021 inspection the Department documented that the Respondent utilizes several materials (e.g., solvents, acids, etchants, etc.) during metal integrity testing conducted at the Respondent's facility that had the potential to be hazardous wastes when spent/discarded. During the inspection, a representative of the Respondent stated the spent/discarded materials associated with the integrity metals testing have been generated at the facility since commencing operations in 1996. Additionally, a file review conducted on or about September 7, 2021, revealed the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for chromium trioxide noted hazardous waste characteristics indicative of hazardous waste code (D007), and the SDSs for the acid etchants noted a pH less than 2.0 indicative of hazardous waste code (D002). Subsequent to the inspection, the Respondent submitted an HW-1 form dated August 11, 2021 that included generated hazardous wastes that included, but were not necessarily limited to: corrosive hazardous waste (D002) and hazardous waste characteristically toxic for chromium (D007).

#### **COMPLIANCE ORDER**

Based on the foregoing, the Respondent is **hereby ordered**:

I.

To take, immediately upon receipt of this **COMPLIANCE ORDER**, any and all steps necessary to meet and maintain compliance with the Hazardous Waste Regulations and the Water Quality Regulations.

II.

To perform, within thirty (30) days after receipt of this **COMPLIANCE ORDER**, a hazardous waste determination on all solid waste generated including but not limited to wastes specifically listed in Findings of the Fact Paragraph II.C, in accordance with LAC 33:V.1005.A. The Respondent shall submit the results of the determination to the Enforcement Division within fifteen (15) days of receipt. All waste shall be managed and disposed of in accordance with the Hazardous Waste or Solid Waste regulations, whichever is applicable.

III.

To submit to the Enforcement Division, within thirty (30) days after receipt of this **COMPLIANCE ORDER**, a written report that includes a detailed description of the circumstances surrounding the cited violations and actions taken or to be taken to achieve compliance with the Order Portion of this **COMPLIANCE ORDER**. This report and all other reports or information required to be submitted to the Enforcement Division by this **COMPLIANCE ORDER** shall be submitted to:

Office of Environmental Compliance  
Post Office Box 4312  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821-4312  
**Attn: Brock Bonvillain**  
**Re: Enforcement Tracking No. MM-CN-21-00486**  
**Agency Interest No. 227984**

**THE RESPONDENT SHALL FURTHER BE ON NOTICE THAT:**

I.

The Respondent has a right to an adjudicatory hearing on a disputed issue of material fact or of law arising from this **COMPLIANCE ORDER**. This right may be exercised by filing a written request with the Secretary no later than thirty (30) days after receipt of this **COMPLIANCE ORDER**.

II.

The request for an adjudicatory hearing shall specify the provisions of the **COMPLIANCE ORDER** on which the hearing is requested and shall briefly describe the basis for the request. This request should reference the Enforcement Tracking Number and Agency Interest Number, which are located in the upper right-hand corner of the first page of this document and should be directed to the following:

Department of Environmental Quality  
Office of the Secretary  
Post Office Box 4302  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821-4302  
**Attn: Hearings Clerk, Legal Division**  
**Re: Enforcement Tracking No. MM-CN-21-00486**  
**Agency Interest No. 227984**

III.

Upon the Respondent's timely filing a request for a hearing, a hearing on the disputed issue of material fact or of law regarding this **COMPLIANCE ORDER** may be scheduled by the Secretary of the Department. The hearing shall be governed by the Act, the Administrative Procedure Act (La. R.S. 49:950, et seq.), and the Division of Administrative Law (DAL) Procedural Rules. The Department may amend or supplement this **COMPLIANCE ORDER** prior to the hearing, after providing sufficient notice and an opportunity for the preparation of a defense for the hearing.

IV.

This **COMPLIANCE ORDER** shall become a final enforcement action unless the request for hearing is timely filed. Failure to timely request a hearing constitutes a waiver of the Respondent's right to a hearing on a disputed issue of material fact or of law under Section 2050.4 of the Act for the violation(s) described herein.

V.

The Respondent's failure to request a hearing or to file an appeal or the Respondent's withdrawal of a request for hearing on this **COMPLIANCE ORDER** shall not preclude the Respondent from contesting the findings of facts in any subsequent penalty action addressing the same violation(s), although the Respondent is estopped from objecting to this **COMPLIANCE ORDER** becoming a permanent part of its compliance history.

VI.

Civil penalties of not more than twenty-seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$27,500) for each day of violation for the violation(s) described herein may be assessed. For violations which occurred on August 15, 2004, or after, civil penalties of not more than thirty-two thousand five hundred dollars (\$32,500) may be assessed for each day of violation. The Respondent's failure or refusal to comply with this **COMPLIANCE ORDER** and the provisions herein will subject the Respondent to possible enforcement procedures under La. R.S. 30:2025, which could result in the assessment of a civil penalty in

an amount of not more than fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) for each day of continued violation or noncompliance.

VII.

For each violation described herein, the Department reserves the right to seek civil penalties in any manner allowed by law, and nothing herein shall be construed to preclude the right to seek such penalties.

**NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY**

I.

Pursuant to La. R.S. 30:2050.3(B), you are hereby notified that the issuance of a penalty assessment is being considered for the violation(s) described herein. Written comments may be filed regarding the violation(s) and the contemplated penalty. If you elect to submit comments, it is requested that they be submitted within ten (10) days of receipt of this notice.

II.

Prior to the issuance of additional appropriate enforcement action(s), you may request a meeting with the Department to present any mitigating circumstances concerning the violation(s). If you would like to have such a meeting, please contact Brock Bonvillain at (225) 219-1423 within ten (10) days of receipt of this **NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY**.

III.

The Department is required by La. R.S. 30:2025(E)(3)(a) to consider the gross revenues of the Respondent and the monetary benefits of noncompliance to determine whether a penalty will be assessed and the amount of such penalty. Please forward the Respondent's most current annual gross revenue statement along with a statement of the monetary benefits of noncompliance for the cited violation(s) to the above named contact person within ten (10) days of receipt of this **NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY**. Include with your statement of monetary benefits the method(s) you utilized to arrive at the sum. If you assert that no monetary benefits have been gained, you are to fully justify that statement. If the Respondent chooses not to submit the requested most current annual gross revenues statement within ten (10) days, it will be viewed by the Department as an admission that the Respondent has the ability to pay the statutory maximum penalty as outlined in La. R.S. 30:2025.

IV.

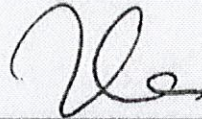
The Department assesses civil penalties based on LAC 33:I.Subpart1.Chapter7. To expedite closure of this **NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY** portion, the Respondent may offer a settlement amount to resolve any claim for civil penalties for the violation(s) described herein. The Respondent may

offer a settlement amount, but the Department is under no obligation to enter into settlement negotiations. The decision to proceed with a settlement is at the discretion of the Department. The settlement offer amount may be entered on the attached "**CONSOLIDATED COMPLIANCE ORDER AND NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY REQUEST TO CLOSE**" form. The Respondent must include a justification of the offer. **DO NOT** submit payment of the offer amount with the form. The Department will review the settlement offer and notify the Respondent as to whether the offer is or is not accepted.

V.

This **CONSOLIDATED COMPLIANCE ORDER & NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY** is effective upon receipt.

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, this 14<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2021.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Lourdes Iturralde  
Assistant Secretary  
Office of Environmental Compliance

Copies of a request for a hearing and/or related correspondence should be sent to:

Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality  
Office of Environmental Compliance  
Enforcement Division  
P.O. Box 4312  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4312  
Attention: Brock Bonvillain



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
 OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE  
 ENFORCEMENT DIVISION  
 POST OFFICE BOX 4312  
 BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70821-4312

CONSOLIDATED COMPLIANCE ORDER &  
 NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY  
 REQUEST TO CLOSE

Enforcement Tracking No.	MM-CN-21-00486	Contact Name	Brock Bonvillain
Agency Interest (AI) No.	227984	Contact Phone No.	(225) 219-1423
Alternate ID Nos.	LAR000102315; LAU008373		
Respondent:	Quality Testing, Inc.	Facility Name:	Quality Testing, Inc.
	c/o Frank C. Traina	Physical Location:	1832 Wooddale Boulevard
	Agent for Service of Process		
	588 Rodney Drive	City, State, Zip:	Baton Rouge, LA 70806
	Baton Rouge, 70808	Parish:	East Baton Rouge

**STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE**

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE	Date Completed	Copy Attached?
A written report was submitted in accordance with Paragraph III of the "Order" portion of the COMPLIANCE ORDER.		
All necessary documents were submitted to the Department within 30 days of receipt of the COMPLIANCE ORDER in accordance with Paragraph II of the "Order" portion of the COMPLIANCE ORDER.		
All necessary documents were submitted to the Department within 45 days of receipt of the COMPLIANCE ORDER in accordance with Paragraph II of the "Order" portion of the COMPLIANCE ORDER.		
All items in the "Findings of Fact" portion of the COMPLIANCE ORDER were addressed and the facility is being operated to meet and maintain the requirements of the "Order" portion of the COMPLIANCE ORDER. Final compliance was achieved as of:		

**SETTLEMENT OFFER (OPTIONAL)**

*(check the applicable option)*

<input type="checkbox"/>	The Respondent is not interested in entering into settlement negotiations with the Department with the understanding that the Department has the right to assess civil penalties based on LAC 33:i.Subpart1.Chapter7.
<input type="checkbox"/>	In order to resolve any claim for civil penalties for the violations in CONSOLIDATED COMPLIANCE ORDER & NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY (MM-CN-21-00486), the Respondent is interested in entering into settlement negotiations with the Department and would like to set up a meeting to discuss settlement procedures.
<input type="checkbox"/>	In order to resolve any claim for civil penalties for the violations in CONSOLIDATED COMPLIANCE ORDER & NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY (MM-CN-21-00486), the Respondent is interested in entering into settlement negotiations with the Department and offers to pay \$ _____ which shall include LDEQ enforcement costs and any monetary benefit of non-compliance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monetary component = \$ _____</li> <li>• Beneficial Environmental Project (BEP) component (optional)= \$ _____</li> <li>• <b>DO NOT SUBMIT PAYMENT OF THE OFFER WITH THIS FORM- the Department will review the settlement offer and notify the Respondent as to whether the offer is or is not accepted.</b></li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Respondent has reviewed the violations noted in CONSOLIDATED COMPLIANCE ORDER & NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY (MM-CN-21-00486) and has attached a justification of its offer and a description of any BEPs if included in settlement offer.

**CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

*I certify, under provisions in Louisiana and United States law that provide criminal penalties for false statements, that based on information and belief formed after reasonable inquiry, the statements and information attached and the compliance statement above, are true, accurate, and complete. I also certify that I do not owe outstanding fees or penalties to the Department for this facility or any other facility I own or operate. I further certify that I am either the Respondent or an authorized representative of the Respondent.*

Respondent's Signature	Respondent's Printed Name	Respondent's Title
Respondent's Physical Address	Respondent's Phone #	Date

**MAIL COMPLETED DOCUMENT TO THE ADDRESS BELOW:**

Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality  
 Office of Environmental Compliance  
 Enforcement Division  
 P.O. Box 4312  
 Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
 Attn: Brock Bonvillain



# SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS

## WHAT IS A SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT?

Once the Department has determined that a penalty is warranted for a violation, the Assistant Secretary of the Department, with the concurrence of the Attorney General, may enter into a settlement agreement with the Respondent as a means to resolve the Department's claim for a penalty.

## HOW DOES THE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT PROCESS WORK?

To begin the settlement agreement process, the Department must receive a written settlement offer. Once this offer is submitted, it is sent for approval by the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Environmental Compliance. The formal Settlement Agreement is drafted and sent to the Attorney General's office where the Attorney General has a 90 day concurrence period. During this time, the Respondent is required to run a public notice in an official journal and/or newspaper of general circulation in each affected parish. After which, a 45 day public comment period is opened to allow the public to submit comments. Once the Department has received concurrence, the settlement agreement is signed by both parties. The Department then forwards a letter to the responsible party to establish a payment plan and/or beneficial environmental project (BEP).

## WHAT SHOULD I INCLUDE IN A SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT?

The Department uses the penalty determination method defined in LAC 33:1.705 as a guideline to accepting settlement offers. The penalty matrix is used to determine a penalty range for each violation based on the two violation specific factors, the nature and gravity of the violation and the degree of risk/impact to human health and property.

		NATURE AND GRAVITY OF THE VIOLATION		
		MAJOR	MODERATE	MINOR
DEGREE OF RISK OR IMPACT TO HUMAN HEALTH OR PROPERTY	MAJOR	\$32,500 to \$20,000	\$20,000 to \$15,000	\$15,000 to \$11,000
	MODERATE	\$11,000 to \$8,000	\$8,000 to \$5,000	\$5,000 to \$3,000
	MINOR	\$3,000 to \$1,500	\$1,500 to \$500	\$500 to \$100

### Degree of Risk to Human Health or Property

**Major:** (actual measurable harm or substantial risk of harm) A violation of major impact to an environmental resource or a hazard characterized by high volume and/or frequent occurrence and/or high pollutant concentration.

**Moderate:** (potential for measurable detrimental impact) A violation of moderate impact and hazard may be one characterized by occasional occurrence and/or pollutant concentration that may be expected to have a detrimental effect under certain conditions

**Minor:** (no harm or risk of harm) A violation of minor impact are isolated single incidences and that cause no measurable detrimental effect or are administrative in nature.

### Nature and Gravity of the Violation

**Major:** Violations of statutes, regulations, orders, permit limits, or permit requirements that result in negating the intent of the requirement to such an extent that little or no implementation of requirements occurred.

**Moderate:** Violations that result in substantially negating the intent of the requirements, but some implementation of the requirements occurred.

**Minor:** Violations that result in some deviation from the intent of the requirement; however, substantial implementation is demonstrated.

The range is adjusted using the following violator specific factors:

1. history of previous violations or repeated noncompliance;
2. gross revenues generated by the respondent;
3. degree of culpability, recalcitrance, defiance, or indifference to regulations or orders;
4. whether the Respondent has failed to mitigate or to make a reasonable attempt to mitigate the damages caused by the violation; and
5. whether the violation and the surrounding circumstances were immediately reported to the department, and whether the violation was concealed or there was an attempt to conceal by the Respondent.



# BEHAVIORAL ENVIRONMENTAL

Given the previous information, the following formula is used to obtain a penalty amount.

$$\text{Penalty Event Total} = \text{Penalty Event Minimum} + (\text{Adjustment Percentage} \times (\text{Penalty Event Maximum} - \text{Penalty Event Minimum} ))$$

After this, the Department adds any monetary benefit of noncompliance to the penalty event. In the event that a monetary benefit is gained due to the delay of a cost that is ultimately paid, the Department adds the applicable judicial interest. Finally, the Department adds all response costs including, but not limited to, the cost of conducting inspections, and the staff time devoted to the preparation of reports and issuing enforcement actions.

### WHAT IS A BEP?

A BEP is a project that provides for environmental mitigation which the respondent is not otherwise legally required to perform, but which the defendant/respondent agrees to undertake as a component of the settlement agreement.

Project categories for BEPs include public health, pollution prevention, pollution reduction, environmental restoration and protection, assessments and audits, environmental compliance promotion, and emergency planning, preparedness and response. Other projects may be considered if the Department determines that these projects have environmental merit and is otherwise fully consistent with the intent of the BEP regulations.

### WHAT HAPPENS IF MY OFFER IS REJECTED?

If an offer is rejected by the Assistant Secretary, the Legal Division will contact the responsible party, or anyone designated as an appropriate contact in the settlement offer, to discuss any discrepancies.

### WHERE CAN I FIND EXAMPLES AND MORE INFORMATION?

Settlement Offers .....	searchable in <u>EDMS</u> using the following filters Media: Air Quality, Function: Enforcement, Description: Settlement
Settlement Agreements .....	<u>Enforcement Division's website</u> specific examples can be provided upon request
Penalty Determination Method .....	<u>LAC 33:1 Chapter 7</u>
Beneficial Environmental Projects .....	<u>LAC 33:1 Chapter 25</u> <u>FAQs</u>
Judicial Interest.....	<u>provided by the Louisiana State Bar Association</u>

