

# Department of Justice

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## COMPANY AND OPERATOR PLEAD GUILTY TO VIOLATION OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT FOR DISCHARGING OILY WASTEWATER INTO THE HARVEY CANAL

**NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA -OAKMONT ENVIRONMENTAL, INC.**, 646 Peters Road, Harvey, Louisiana, pled guilty today to a felony environmental crime involving the illegal discharge of 1,200,000 gallons of oily wastewater directly into the Harvey Canal from September 2007 to March 2008, announced U. S. Attorney Jim Letten.

**OAKMONT** pled guilty before U. S. District Judge Martin L.C. Feldman to one count of violation of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S. C. 1319(c)(2)(A). The maximum penalty **OAKMONT** faces is five (5) years probation and a \$500,000 fine. Sentencing has been scheduled for February 8, 2012 at 1:30 p.m.

The government filed a Bill of Information on August 31, 2011 charging **OAKMONT** with a knowing violation of the Clean Water Act for discharging oily wastewater into the Harvey Canal. Today, **OAKMONT** admitted that it had a permit which allowed **OAKMONT** to discharge wastewater into the Jefferson Parish publicly owned sewerage treatment plant only after it had been pretreated by **OAKMONT**. **OAKMONT** was supposed to separate the oil from the water through an oily water separator system. The separated oil was to be shipped to a recycling plant while the pretreated wastewater was to be discharged through the Jefferson Parish sewerage system. However, instead of pretreating the wastewater, **OAKMONT** installed a discharge hose in the rear of its facility and discharged the oily wastewater directly into the Harvey Canal, a water of the United States.

In a related case, **CLIFTON P. KARR**, age 62, from Amite, Louisiana, pled guilty today for a negligent discharge of oily wastewater from the **OAKMONT** facility. **KARR** was the operator of the **OAKMONT** facility in Harvey, Louisiana.

**KARR** pled guilty before U. S. Magistrate Judge Daniel E. Knowles, III, to a one count misdemeanor violation of the Clean Water Act. **KARR** faces a statutory maximum imprisonment of one (1) year and a fine of up to \$100,000. Sentencing has been scheduled for February 8, 2012 at 10:30 a.m.

The government filed a Bill of Information on August 31, 2011, charging **KARR** with a violation of the Clean Water Act by negligently discharging wastewater into the Harvey Canal, a water of the United States.

**KARR** admitted today that he knew that the facility he operated did not have a permit to discharge wastewater into the Harvey Canal. He knew that **OAKMONT** did not have the ability to process the waste properly because the original owner had not installed the proper equipment and that he had no place to store the waste. **KARR** admitted that he discharged the oily wastewater into the Harvey Canal.

The cases were investigated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the United States Coast Guard Criminal Investigative Service, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality-Criminal Investigative Division and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Dorothy Manning Taylor.

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