



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

BOBBY JINDAL
GOVERNOR

PEGGY M. HATCH
SECRETARY

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Contact: Greg Langley
Phone: 225-219-3964

Felony environmental charges added for Lafourche Parish man accused of theft and criminal damage to property

BATON ROUGE - Investigators within the Criminal Investigation Division of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality booked a Lafourche Parish man on Sept. 11 for the illegal discharge of diesel fuel into state waterways.

Garrett Gilliam, 41, of Cutoff, was originally arrested by Lafourche Parish Sheriff's deputies on August 26, 2014, for stealing diesel from the 1 of 12 pump station located off of Highway 652 in Raceland sometime between the night of August 23, 2014 and the morning of August 24, 2014. After his arrest, Gilliam admitted to deputies that he stole diesel and intentionally discharged some of it near the pump station to make his stolen load light enough to transport. Gilliam was originally booked on three counts of felony theft and one count of felony criminal damage to property.

Following the arrest, Lafourche Parish Sheriff's deputies contacted criminal investigators with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality about the incident. As the result of their ongoing investigation, DEQ investigators booked Gilliam with an additional felony charge of knowingly discharging a pollutant to state waterways.

"This is another example of local law enforcement working with DEQ to combat environmental crimes and protect the state's natural resources," said Jeff Nolan, Manager of DEQ's Criminal Investigation Division. "We continue to encourage local law enforcement to contact our Criminal Investigation Division whenever they discover these types of crimes."

If convicted of the crime of knowingly discharging pollutants to waters of the state, Gilliam faces possible imprisonment for not more than three years with or without hard labor, or a fine of not more than \$50,000, or both.

The mission of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is to protect the environment and public health. Any persons with knowledge of any spills, releases, odors, fish kills, open burning, waste tires and any other types of environmental incidents may contact the department at 225-219-3640 or Toll Free 1-888-763-5424.

An arrest does not constitute guilt in a criminal case. All evidence compiled during the investigation is presented to area prosecutors who determine if formal charges are warranted.