



## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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**For Immediate Release**  
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### **West Monroe water system operator sentenced to prison on water permit violations**

**BATON ROUGE** – A West Monroe water system operator, convicted by a federal jury in January, was sentenced yesterday on felony violations and a misdemeanor of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, commonly referred to as the Clean Water Act.

Jeffrey Pruett, 58, as president and CEO of Louisiana Land and Water Company (LLWC) and the Principal Officer of LWC Management Company, operated more than 30 public water supply system units and wastewater treatment units in eastern Louisiana. In June 2009, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Criminal Investigation Division and Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's Criminal Investigation Division, along with other local, state and federal partners, arrested Pruett on 17 felony charges involving violations of his company's water discharge permits.

Pruett was charged with violating his company's Louisiana Pollution Discharge Elimination System permits by not providing monitoring results, violating effluent discharge limits set forth in the permit, operating without a permit, having unpermitted discharges and failing to provide proper operation and maintenance for this units. His companies faced the same felony charges, along with civil penalties from DEQ for permit violations. Numerous compliance issues were also been associated with the operation of Pruett's facilities.

Yesterday, U.S. District Court Chief Judge Robert G. James sentenced Pruett to 21 months of imprisonment for the felony counts and 12 months of imprisonment for the misdemeanor, to be served concurrently. Pruett will report to jail on July 18. Upon his release, Pruett will then serve a year of supervised release. Pruett was also issued a fine to be assessed jointly and severally of \$310,000, and he must pay a special assessment of \$725.

LLWC was issued a \$300,000 fine to be assessed jointly and severally, and LLWC must pay a special assessment of \$2,800. In addition, LWC Management was issued a \$240,000 fine to be assessed jointly and severally, and must pay a special assessment of \$400. The corporate entities were not issued probation.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Criminal Investigation Division, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District, DEQ, Louisiana State Police and the Ouachita Parish Sheriff's Office cooperated in the case.

“The eradication of illegal discharges and violations of the Clean Water Act of any magnitude is a top priority for DEQ,” said DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch. “Our partnership with state, local and federal authorities has been a vital asset in bringing such violators to justice, and this case is an example of the aggressive prosecution put forth toward those found guilty of violating the law and skirting environmental regulations.”

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 DEQ at 225-219-3640 or Toll Free 1-888-763-5424.