

# Department of Justice

United States Attorney Walt Green  
Middle District of Louisiana

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## **BATON ROUGE BUSINESSMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME AND OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE**

BATON ROUGE, LA - United States Attorney Walt Green announced the conviction of another defendant in connection with a wide ranging investigation into corruption and fraud involving compliance with federal environmental laws.

Earlier today, ROGER J. DIES, age 55, of Zachary, Louisiana, pled guilty before U.S. District Judge Shelly D. Dick to failing to report third party wastewater discharges in violation of the Clean Water Act, in violation of Title 33, United States Code, Section 1319(c)(2)(A), and obstruction of justice, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1503 and 2. DIES also admitted to the forfeiture allegations contained in the Indictment, which was previously returned by a federal grand jury in December of 2013. DIES faces a maximum sentence up to 13 years in prison and substantial fines.

According to the written plea agreement entered into between DIES and the United States, DIES owned and operated Baton Rouge Tank Wash (BRTW), a business focused on washing the interior of tanks that hauled chemical and food-grade loads aboard trucks. BRTW was permitted to discharge wastewater resulting from the tank washes into the municipal sewer system, subject to certain requirements and limitations. From in or about March of 2009, however, through September of 2012, DIES failed to notify DPW that he had begun discharging third party wastewater, despite knowing that notification was required by his permit. DIES also failed to submit monthly and daily logs reflecting all wastewater discharged from the facility. DIES was asked about the nature of his business, on numerous occasions, and he routinely misled and/or made false representations, intended to conceal the fact that BRTW was accepting substantial quantities of third party wastewater. Then, in late 2012, as a federal grand jury investigation into the matter was underway, DIES provided the grand jury with false documents that had been created with the goal of disguising BRTW's third party wastewater business. As the investigation continued, in February of 2013, DIES provided the grand jury with false testimony in which he represented that he had produced all documents that were responsive to the subpoenas, when, in fact, he knew that numerous responsive documents had not been produced.

U.S. Attorney Green stated, "This office is committed to investigating and prosecuting criminal violations of the federal environmental laws. Such laws are in place to protect health and promote safety across our region, and compliance with the laws should not be disregarded as an administrative burden or tossed aside in an effort to maximize profit. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to identify and prosecute fraudulent conduct, including in this important area of the law."

“EPA and its regulatory partners depend on accurate self-reporting to help ensure compliance with the Clean Water Act,” said Ivan Vikin, Special Agent-in-Charge of EPA’s criminal enforcement program in Louisiana. “Despite orders to stop, the defendant continued his illegal actions and falsified reports to cover his tracks. This case demonstrates that those who knowingly put public health at risk can expect to face the consequences in court.”

“The individual charged in this case avoided paying over \$24,000 in sewer user fees by under reporting the amount of pollutants discharged to the city’s sewage collection system,” said Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality Secretary Peggy Hatch. “We take issue with any individual or business who side-steps compliance by under reporting in the name of profit. We will continue to work with our federal partners to ensure compliance and keep the playing field level for the people and businesses out there who willing to doing it right.”

This ongoing operation is being conducted by the United States Attorney’s Office, the Criminal Investigation Division of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Criminal Investigation Division of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality. The matter is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Corey R. Amundson, who serves as Chief of the Criminal Division, and Alan A. Stevens, who serves as a Deputy Chief.

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