

STATE OF LOUISIANA

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

IN THE MATTER OF:

LAFAYETTE CONSOLIDATED
GOVERNMENT

AI # 4121

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

* Settlement Tracking No.
* SA-AE-22-0056
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* Enforcement Tracking No.
* AE-PP-19-00686
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SETTLEMENT

The following Settlement is hereby agreed to between Lafayette Consolidated Government (“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 governmental entity that owned and/or operated a facility located in Lafayette, Lafayette Parish, Louisiana (“the Facility”).

II

On June 14, 2021, the Department issued to Respondent a Notice of Potential Penalty, Enforcement Tracking No. AE-PP-19-00686 (Exhibit 1).

III

Respondent denies it committed any violations or that it is liable for any fines, forfeitures and/or penalties.

IV

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 TWELVE THOUSAND AND NO/100 DOLLARS (\$12,000.00), of which One Thousand Two Hundred Forty and 24/100 Dollars (\$1,240.24) represents the Department's enforcement costs, in settlement of the claims set forth in this 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).

V

Respondent further agrees that the Department may consider the inspection report(s), the Notice of Potential Penalty and this Settlement 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.

VI

This 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 agreement in any action by the Department to enforce this agreement.

VII

This settlement 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, the Department considered the factors for issuing civil penalties set forth in La. R. S. 30:2025(E) of the Act.

VIII

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.

IX

The Respondent has caused a public notice advertisement to be placed in the official journal of the parish governing authority in Lafayette Parish, Louisiana. The advertisement, in form and wording approved by the Department, announced the availability of this settlement 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 is executed on behalf of the Department, more than forty-five (45) days have elapsed since publication of the notice.

X

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 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.

XI

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

XII

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.

LAFAYETTE CONSOLIDATED
GOVERNMENT

BY: _____

(Signature)

JOSHUA S. GUILLORY

(Printed)

TITLE: MAYOR - PRESIDENT

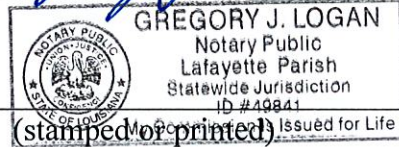
THUS DONE AND SIGNED in duplicate original before me this 4th day of

April

, 20 23

, at Lafayette, LA

NOTARY PUBLIC (ID # _____)



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Boyer W. Eringles, Secretary

BY: _____

Celena J. Cage, Assistant Secretary
Office of Environmental Compliance

THUS DONE AND SIGNED in duplicate original before me this 6th day of

July

, 20 23

, at Baton Rouge, Louisiana

NOTARY PUBLIC (ID # 66881)

Jay L. Glorioso
(stamped or printed)

Approved: _____

Celena J. Cage, Assistant Secretary

JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR



CHUCK CARR BROWN, PH.D.
SECRETARY

State of Louisiana
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

June 14, 2021



CERTIFIED MAIL (7012 2210 0001 1915 5212)
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

LAFAYETTE CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT
c/o Josh Guillory, Mayor-President
P. O. Box 4017-C
Lafayette, Louisiana 70502

**RE: NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY
ENFORCEMENT TRACKING NO. AE-PP-19-00686
AGENCY INTEREST NO. 4121**

Dear Sir/Madam:

On or about February 3, 2019, and February 20, 2019, inspections of the **NORTH WATER TREATMENT PLANT (FACILITY)**, owned and/or operated by **LAFAYETTE CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT (RESPONDENT)**, were performed to determine the degree of compliance with the Louisiana Environmental Quality Act (the Act) and the Air Quality Regulations. The Facility is located at 200 N. Buchanan Street in Lafayette, Lafayette Parish, Louisiana. The Respondent does not operate under an air quality permit.

On or about February 3, 2019, the Department received notification of an unauthorized discharge (Incident No. 189685) of approximately 1,000 pounds of calcium hydroxide (lime) into the air from a silo during a product transfer at the Facility. On or about February 3, 2019, the Department's inspector conducted a phone interview with a representative of the Respondent to inquire about the unauthorized discharge. According to the Respondent's representative, a transfer of hydrated lime powder via pneumatic lines from a storage tank to a silo occurred between 9:30 AM and 10:30 AM on February 3, 2019, and the release of hydrated lime powder was discovered by the Facility between 10:30 AM and 11:00 AM.

According to the unauthorized discharge report dated February 6, 2019, an operator at the Facility found that the tank gauging cap was off the standpipe and hydrated lime powder was released. The operator secured the cap in its proper place. The majority of the release was to the roof of the Facility; however, some powder was released to a residential neighborhood. The United States National Response Center (NRC) was notified of the incident at 12:33 PM, and the Louisiana State Police Hazmat Hotline was notified at 2:49 PM.

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On February 3, 2019, the Lafayette Fire Department Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) Unit and Lafayette Utilities System/Lafayette Consolidated Government declared an evacuation order for residents in the affected zone due to the remaining product on the roof of the Facility, general wind/weather conditions, and ongoing exposure potential.

According to the Department's inspection on or about February 20, 2019, the calculations were updated to approximately 2,500 pounds of hydrated lime powder and were estimated to be released to one (1) to two (2) city blocks. Additionally, the Department's inspector observed that cleanup of the release was completed.

While the investigation by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (the Department) is not yet complete, the following violations were noted during the course of the inspection:

- A. The Respondent failed to notify the Department of Public Safety 24-hour Louisiana Emergency Hazardous Materials Hotline by telephone for the unauthorized discharge that caused an emergency condition no later than one (1) hour after learning of the discharge. Specifically, the Louisiana State Police Hazmat Hotline was notified at 2:49 PM on February 3, 2019; however, the Respondent learned the unauthorized discharge occurred between 10:30 AM and 11:00 AM on February 3, 2019. The Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for hydrated lime listed hazards such as severe respiratory irritation or burning of the eyes and possible permanent damage, damage to lungs through prolonged exposure, and skin irritation. The failure to notify the Department of Public Safety 24-hour Louisiana Emergency Hazardous Materials Hotline by telephone no later than one (1) hour after learning of the discharge that caused an emergency condition is a violation of LAC 33:I.3915.A.1 and La. R.S. 30:2057(A)(2). The Respondent submitted correspondence, received by the Department on September 4, 2019, which stated the Facility had since updated and reprioritized their call list and retrained employees on proper notification protocol.
- B. The Respondent failed to take all reasonable precautions to prevent particulate matter from becoming airborne. Specifically, approximately 2,500 pounds of hydrated lime powder was released to an estimated one (1) to two (2) city blocks on February 3, 2019 from the silo on the roof of the Facility due to an unsecured cam lock cap. The Respondent's failure to secure the cap caused particulate matter to become airborne. Failure to take all reasonable precautions to prevent particulate matter from becoming airborne is a violation of LAC 33:III.1305.A and La. R.S. 30:2057(A)(1) and 30:2057(A)(2). The Respondent submitted correspondence, received by the Department on September 4, 2019, which stated the Facility issued new procedures that require visual daily inspections and inspections before transferring and receiving a lime shipment.

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.

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Prior to the issuance of any additional appropriate enforcement action, 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 Alissa Cockerham at (225) 219-3785 or Alissa.cockerham@la.gov within ten (10) days of receipt of this **NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY**.

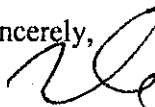
The Department is required by La. R.S. 30:2025(E)(3)(a) to consider the gross revenues of the Respondent and the monetary benefits of noncompliance in order to determine whether a penalty will be assessed and the amount of such penalty. Please forward the Respondent's most current annual gross revenue statement along with a statement of the monetary benefits of noncompliance for the cited violations 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 this 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.

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

The Department assesses civil penalties based on LAC 33:I.Subpart1.Chapter 7. To expedite closure of this **NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY**, 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 "**NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY REQUEST TO SETTLE**" 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.

To reduce document handling, please refer to the Enforcement Tracking Number and Agency Interest Number on the front of this document on all correspondence in response to this action.

Sincerely,



Lourdes Iturralde
Assistant Secretary
Office of Environmental Compliance

LI/ARC/arc
Alt ID No. 1520-00451

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c: LUS N. Water Treatment Plant
c/o Jeffrey B. Stewart
200 N. Buchanan Street
Lafayette, Louisiana 70501

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE



ENFORCEMENT DIVISION
POST OFFICE BOX 4312
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70821-4312

**NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY
REQUEST TO SETTLE (OPTIONAL)**

Enforcement Tracking No.	AE-PP-19-00686	Contact Name	Alissa Cockerham
Agency Interest (AI) No.	4121	Contact Phone No.	(225) 219-3785
Alternate ID No.	1520-00451		
Respondent:	Lafayette Consolidated Government	Facility Name:	North Water Treatment Plant
	c/o Josh Guillory, Mayor-President	Physical Location:	200 N. Buchanan Street
	P. O. Box 4017-C		
	Lafayette, Louisiana 70502	City, State, Zip:	Lafayette, Louisiana 70501
		Parish:	Lafayette

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 33:1.Subpart1.Chapter7.
<input type="checkbox"/>	In order to resolve any claim for civil penalties for the violations in NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY (AE-PP-19-00686), 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 NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY (AE-PP-19-00686), 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"> • Monetary component = \$ _____ • Beneficial Environmental Project (BEP) component (optional)= \$ _____ • 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.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Respondent has reviewed the violations noted in NOTICE OF POTENTIAL PENALTY (AE-PP-19-00686) 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: Alissa Cockerham

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
MAJOR	\$32,500	\$20,000	\$15,000
	to \$20,000	to \$15,000	to \$11,000
MODERATE	\$11,000	\$8,000	\$5,000
	to \$8,000	to \$5,000	to \$3,000
MINOR	\$3,000	\$1,500	\$500
	to \$1,500	to \$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.



SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS

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>
Judicial Interest.....	<u>FAQs</u> provided by the Louisiana State Bar Association

