

AG Schimel: Announces Environmental Protection Unit Enforcement Results

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Environmental Protection Unit has released its environmental enforcement results for the fourth quarter of 2017. The unit obtained judgments in 15 state enforcement cases and in one federal Superfund case that was prosecuted jointly with the U.S. Department of Justice and the State of Minnesota. The state judgments totaled \$714,540 in forfeitures and related surcharges, plus an additional \$17,826,000 in projects designed to protect public health and the environment. The joint federal case secured \$332,000 that is intended to be used primarily for wild rice restoration projects on the Wisconsin side of the St. Louis River Estuary near Superior, Wisconsin as part of an overall \$8.2 million settlement.

“DOJ continues to prioritize the important work of enforcing the state’s environmental and natural resources laws,” said Attorney General Brad Schimel. “The talented individuals in DOJ’s Environmental Protection Unit are dedicated to helping protect and restore our state’s natural resources. We have made great progress in 2017 working with our federal partners to secure robust financial commitments to clean up some of our state’s most contaminated sites through aggressive enforcement of the nation’s Superfund law.”

The state enforcement actions resolved civil prosecutions for air pollution control violations, hazardous waste spills, pollutant discharges to surface waters, hazardous waste management violations, and improper abandonment of underground petroleum storage tanks. In one case, DOJ secured an \$8 million commitment from a manufacturing facility in Marshfield to upgrade an industrial dryer and associated air pollution control equipment, in addition to agreeing to implement an enhanced

fugitive dust control program.

In an unrelated case, DOJ worked with a chemical manufacturing company to resolve a decades-long dispute over historic groundwater contamination near Cottage Grove. As part of the settlement, the company agreed to finalize site investigation and remedial design activities at an estimated cost of \$6 million and committed to implement a long-term remedy to address remaining environmental concerns; the value of that remedy has yet to be estimated. In other unrelated cases, DOJ finalized a \$4 million settlement to resolve a groundwater contamination case in Madison, and secured a \$106,000 commitment from a hazardous waste management company in Marinette to reduce hazardous air pollutant emissions on top of paying a \$100,000 penalty.

For the year, DOJ completed 49 state environmental enforcement cases resulting in \$1,450,026 in forfeitures and related surcharges and secured an additional \$18,588,500 for environmental projects, for a total judgment value of \$20,038,526. The three joint federal Superfund cases settled in 2017 secured \$242,332,000 in future restoration commitments for the state's natural resources.

<https://www.doj.state.wi.us/news-releases/ag-schimel-announces-environmental-protection-unit-enforcement-results-1>