



NEWS RELEASE

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KODIAK FISH PROCESSOR PLEADS GUILTY TO ILLEGAL DUMPING OF AMMONIA AND ORDERED TO PAY \$205,000 IN CRIMINAL PENALTIES

Anchorage, Alaska – U.S. Attorney Karen L. Loeffler announced today that North Pacific Seafoods pled guilty in U.S. District Court in Anchorage to a charge of illegal dumping of ammonia into the Kodiak city sewer.

North Pacific Seafoods is a Seattle, Washington corporation, which is a subsidiary of Marubeni, a Japanese corporation. North Pacific Seafoods owns five seafood processing facilities throughout Alaska, including Alaska Pacific Seafoods, located in Kodiak, Alaska. North Pacific Seafoods pled guilty to one count of violating the Clean Water Act for illegal dumping of ammonia from its facility, Alaska Pacific Seafoods, into the Kodiak city sewer.

North Pacific Seafoods was sentenced today by Chief United States District Court Judge Ralph R. Beistline, to three years of probation, and \$205,000 in criminal penalties, \$55,000 of which is to be directed to the City of Kodiak for hazardous waste response training and equipment for sewer and fire department employees. The terms of probation ordered by Judge Beistline also require that North Pacific Seafoods comply with an Environmental Compliance Plan that includes, among other things, training for all employees at all five facilities in Alaska regarding proper handling of hazardous wastes and specifically ammonia.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Andrea “Aunnie” Steward, on November 29, 2011, North Pacific Seafoods’ employees at its Alaska Pacific Seafoods facility dumped approximately 40 pounds of ammonia waste from its refrigeration system into the Kodiak city sewer. The ammonia odor was detected by employees at the sewage plant for Kodiak. The Kodiak Fire Department was asked to help locate the source of the ammonia. The chief engineer for the Alaska Pacific Seafoods facility at first denied discharging the ammonia when asked about the ammonia odor. Sewer employees then traced the discharge back to the Alaska Pacific Seafoods facility, at which time the chief engineer admitted to the discharge. The discharge of the ammonia by the Alaska Pacific Seafoods facility wiped out the secondary treatment at the sewer system and caused the sewer system to violate its Clean Water Act permit.

A joint investigation by the federal Environmental Protection Agency and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation determined that the facility had been discharging ammonia into the St. Paul Harbor before and after the sewer incident in violation of its Clean Water Act permit. North Pacific Seafoods disputes the illegality of the ammonia discharges into St. Paul Harbor that occurred prior to the entry of its guilty plea but agrees that in the future such discharges will be prohibited.

The chief engineer that directed the discharge at the Alaska Pacific Seafoods facility, Bill Long, is scheduled to be arraigned in state court on Friday, March 14, 2014, at 9:30 a.m., on a charge of violating the permit regulated by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

“This result demonstrates how the longstanding federal-state partnership works to protect the public health, safety and environment of Alaska. It further sends a message that fish processors and other companies that handle hazardous wastes must be vigilant in their efforts to meet regulatory requirements,” said U.S. Attorney Karen Loeffler.

“By the company’s own admission, North Pacific Seafoods’ employees negligently discharged enough anhydrous ammonia – a potentially lethal chemical – to knock out Kodiak’s wastewater treatment plant, forcing it to violate its federal Clean Water Act permit and potentially endangering plant workers. Seafood processors should know that cutting corners and illegally discharging ammonia puts their facility, their workers, and the community at risk,” said Tyler Amon, Special Agent-in-Charge of EPA Criminal Investigation Division in the Pacific Northwest.

“The State, in partnership with its federal counterparts, takes seriously the enforcement and protection of Alaska’s waters and lands. Corporations like North Pacific Seafoods and their employees must be held accountable for their actions when they violate state and federal law. The State will criminally prosecute those who endanger the health of Alaska’s citizens and pollute our environment,” said Carole A. Holley, Assistant Attorney General, Alaska Office of Special Prosecutions and Appeals.

Ms. Loeffler commends the United States Environmental Protection Agency Criminal Investigation Division and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation for the investigation of this case.

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