

UNITED STATES  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 6  
DALLAS, TEXAS

FILED  
2009 AUG -7 AM 8:05  
REGIONAL HEARING CLERK  
EPA REGION VI

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IN THE MATTER OF:

GIBSON PRODUCTS, L.P.

HOUSTON, TEXAS

RESPONDENT

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DOCKET NO. EPCRA 06-2009-0517

COMPLAINT AND  
CONSENT AGREEMENT AND  
FINAL ORDER

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**COMPLAINT AND  
CONSENT AGREEMENT AND FINAL ORDER**

The Director, Multimedia Planning and Permitting Division, United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6 ("EPA") as Complainant, and Gibson Products, L.P., located in Houston, Texas (hereinafter "Respondent"), in the above referenced action, have consented to the terms of this Complaint and Consent Agreement and Final Order ("Complaint" and "CAFO").

NOW THEREFORE, before the taking of any testimony, without any adjudication of any issues of law or fact herein, the parties agree to the terms of this Consent Agreement and Final Order.

I.  
**PRELIMINARY STATEMENT**

1. This enforcement proceeding is instituted by EPA pursuant to Section 325(c) Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act, 42 U.S.C. § 11045(c), (also known as the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986, ["EPCRA"]) which authorizes the Administrator to bring an administrative action to assess a penalty of up to

\$25,000<sup>1</sup> for each violation of Section 313 of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11023 (relating to submission of toxic chemical release forms). This proceeding was instituted by the issuance of a Complaint and Notice of Opportunity for Hearing [hereinafter "Complaint"] incorporated herein.

2. The Complaint alleges Respondent violated regulations promulgated pursuant to the Act.

3. For purposes of this proceeding, Respondent admits the jurisdictional allegations of this Complaint; however, Respondent neither admits nor denies the specific factual allegations contained in this Complaint.

4. Respondent consents to the issuance of this CAFO hereinafter recited and consents to the assessment and payment of the stated civil penalty in the amount and by the method set out in this CAFO.

5. By signature on this Complaint and CAFO, Respondent waives any right to an appeal of this proceeding.

6. Respondent represents that it is duly authorized to execute this CAFO and that the party signing this CAFO on behalf of the Respondent is duly authorized to bind the Respondent to the terms and conditions of this CAFO.

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<sup>1</sup>The Civil Penalty Inflation Adjustment Rule of December 31, 1996 (61 Fed. Reg. 69360) provides for ten percent (10%) increases in the statutory penalty provisions cited in the EPCRA § 313 Enforcement Response Policy (ERP), August 10, 1992. The ten percent (10%) increase is effective for violations which occur between the 1996 and the 2002 calendar years. The statutory maximum penalty for this time period is increased from \$25,000 to \$27,500. The Civil Penalty Inflation Adjustment Rule of February 13, 2004 (69 Fed. Reg. 7121) provides for a further increase in the statutory penalty provisions in the ERP by 17.23% for violations beginning with the 2003 calendar year. Violations of EPCRA § 313 for the 2003 calendar year, and through the 2007 calendar year shall have the statutory maximum penalty increased from \$27,500 to \$32,500.

7. Respondent agrees that the provisions of this CAFO shall be binding on its officers, directors, employees, agents, servants, authorized representatives, successors, and assigns, including, but not limited to, subsequent purchasers.

8. Respondent hereby certifies that, as of the date of its execution of this CAFO, the Gibson Products, L.P. facility has corrected the violation(s) alleged in the Complaint and is now, to the best of its knowledge, in compliance with all applicable requirements of Section 313 of EPCRA and the regulations promulgated thereunder.

## **II. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY BACKGROUND**

9. Section 313 of EPCRA, and 40 C.F.R. §§ 372.22, 372.23, and 372.30, require the owner or operator of a facility that: (a) has 10 or more full-time employees; (b) is an establishment with a primary Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) major group or industry code listed in § 372.23(a), or a primary North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) subsector or industry code listed in § 372.23(b) or § 372.23(c); and (c) “manufactures, processes, or otherwise uses” a toxic 313 chemical listed under subsection 313(c) of EPCRA and 40 C.F.R. § 372.65, in excess of the threshold quantity established under Section 313(f) of EPCRA and 40 C.F.R. §§ 372.25 and 372.28 during the calendar year, to complete and submit a Toxic Chemical Release Inventory Form R to the Administrator of EPA and to the State in which the subject facility is located by July 1, for the preceding calendar year, for each toxic chemical known by the owner or operator to be “manufactured, processed, or otherwise used” in quantities exceeding the established threshold quantity during that preceding calendar year.

10. As set forth in Section 313(f) of EPCRA and 40 C.F.R. § 372.25, the reporting threshold amount for toxic chemicals "manufactured or processed" at a facility is 75,000 pounds for calendar year 1987, 50,000 pounds for calendar year 1988, and 25,000 pounds for calendar years subsequent to and including 1989. The reporting threshold for a toxic chemical "otherwise used" at a facility is 10,000 pounds for calendar years subsequent to and including 1987. Thresholds for persistent bioaccumulative toxins (PBT's) are individually listed at 40 C.F.R. § 372.28.

**III.**  
**FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

11. Gibson Products, L.P., is a corporation authorized to do business in the State of Texas. The Respondent's principal place of business is located at 5691 Surrey Square Drive, Houston, Texas 77017.

12. Respondent is a "person" as that term is defined by Section 329(7) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11049(7).

13. Respondent is the owner or operator of a "facility" as that term is defined by Section 329(4) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11049(4).

14. Respondent's facility has 10 or more "full-time employees," as that term is defined by 40 C.F.R. § 372.3.

15. Respondent's facility is in a covered Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Code 3489, fabricated pipe and pipe fittings, equivalent to North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code 332996, fabricated pipe and pipe fitting manufacturing.

16. In correspondence with Respondent, dated May 5, 2009, Respondent was notified the alleged violations had not been resolved.

17. For calendar years 2004 - 2006, Respondent failed to report chromium. Chromium is toxic chemical within the meaning of 40 C.F.R. §§ 372.4 and 372.65.

18. During calendar years 2004 - 2006, the toxic chemical listed in Paragraph 17 of this Complaint and CAFO was either "manufactured, processed or otherwise used" as those terms are defined by Section 313(b) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11023(b), and 40 C.F.R. § 372.3, at Respondent's facility.

19. The toxic chemical, listed in Paragraph 17 above, was used in excess of threshold quantities for the respective years, pursuant to Section 313(c) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11023(c) and 40 C.F.R. §§ 372.25 and 372.28.

#### **IV.** **VIOLATIONS**

20. According to information obtained from the Respondent, the toxic chemical in paragraph 17 was not reported by the respective due dates for calendar years 2004, 2005, and 2006.

#### **V.** **CIVIL PENALTY AND TERMS OF SETTLEMENT**

21. For the reasons set forth above, and in the interest of resolving this matter, Respondent has agreed to pay a civil penalty which has been determined in accordance with Section 325(c) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11045(c), which authorizes EPA to assess a civil penalty

of up to Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000)<sup>2</sup> per day for each violation of EPCRA. Upon consideration of the entire record herein, including the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, which are hereby adopted and made a part hereof, and upon consideration of the nature, circumstances, extent and gravity of the alleged violations, and with respect to the Respondent, its culpability, lack of prior EPCRA § 313 violations, and ability to continue in business, it is **ORDERED** that Respondent be assessed a civil penalty of **NINE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$9,000)**.

22. Within thirty (30) days of Respondent's receipt of this fully executed Complaint and CAFO, Respondent shall pay the assessed civil penalty by cashier's check or certified check, made payable to "Treasurer, United States of America, EPA - Region 6." Payment shall be remitted in one of three (3) ways: regular U.S. Postal Service mail, to include certified mail; overnight mail; or wire transfer. For regular U.S. Postal Service mail, U.S. Postal Service certified mail, or U.S. Postal Service express mail, the check(s) should be remitted to:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Fines and Penalties  
Cincinnati Finance Center  
P.O. Box 979077  
St. Louis, MO 63197-9000

For overnight mail (non-U.S. Postal Service, e.g. Fed Ex), the check(s) should be remitted to:

U.S. Bank  
Government Lockbox 979077 US EPA Fines & Penalties  
1005 Convention Plaza  
SL-MO-C2-GL  
St. Louis, MO 63101

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

with a phone number of (314) 418-1028.

For wire transfer, the payment should be remitted to:

Federal Reserve Bank of New York  
ABA = 021030004  
Account = 68010727  
SWIFT address = FRNYUS33  
33 Liberty Street  
New York, NY 10045  
Field Tag 4200 of the Fedwire message should read "D 68010727 Environmental  
Protection Agency"

As an alternative to the above methods of payment, EPA now has the flexibility to accept payment via credit cards and bank transfers over the internet. Visit [www.pay.gov](http://www.pay.gov) and see **Attachment 1** for directions if remittance is to be made in this manner.

**PLEASE NOTE: Docket number EPCRA 06-2009-0517 shall be clearly typed on the check, or otherwise noted, to ensure proper credit.** The check or other method of payment shall also be accompanied by a transmittal letter and shall reference Respondent's name and address, the case name, and docket number of the administrative complaint and CAFO.

Respondent's adherence to this request will ensure proper credit is given when penalties are received for the Region. Respondent shall also send a simultaneous notice of such payment, including a copy of the money order, or check, and transmittal letter to the following:

Morton E. Wakeland, Jr., Ph.D.  
Toxics Section (6PD-T)  
U.S. EPA, Region 6  
1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200  
Dallas, Texas 75202-2733;

and

Region 6 Hearing Clerk  
U.S. EPA Region 6  
1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200  
Dallas, Texas 75202-2733

23. If Respondent fails to submit payment within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this Order, Respondent may be subject to a civil action pursuant to EPCRA § 325(f), 42 U.S.C. § 11045(f), to collect any unpaid portion of the assessed penalty, together with interest, handling charges and nonpayment penalties as set forth below.

24. Pursuant to 31 U.S.C. § 3717, EPA is entitled to assess interest and penalties or debts owed to the United States and a charge to cover the cost of processing and handling a delinquent claim. Respondent shall pay the following amounts:

a. Interest. If EPA does not receive payment within thirty (30) days of the due date, and the Respondent cannot provide evidence that payment was properly sent, interest will accrue on the amount due from the due date at the current annual rate prescribed and published by the Secretary of the Treasury pursuant to 31 U.S.C. § 3717(a)(1) and 4 C.F.R. § 102.13(c).

b. Handling Charge. Pursuant to 31 U.S.C. § 3717 (e)(1), a monthly handling charge of \$15.00 shall be paid if any portion of the assessed penalty is more than 30 days past due.

c. Nonpayment Penalty. Pursuant to 31 U.S.C. § 3717(c)(2), a nonpayment penalty of six (6) percent per annum shall be paid on any portion of the assessed penalty that is more than 90 days past due, which nonpayment penalty shall be calculated as of the day the underlying penalty first becomes past due. 40 C.F.R. §§ 102.13(d) and (e).



25. This document is a "Final Order" as that term is defined in the Enforcement Response Policy for Section 313 of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (1986) and Section 6607 of the Pollution Prevention Act (1990), dated August 10, 1992, for the purpose of demonstrating a history of "prior such violations."

**VI.**

**RETENTION OF ENFORCEMENT RIGHTS**

26. EPA does not waive any rights or remedies available to EPA for any violations by the Respondent of Federal laws, regulations, statutes, or permitting programs.

27. Nothing in this CAFO shall relieve Respondent of the duty to comply with all applicable provisions of Section 313 of EPCRA.

**VII.**

**COSTS**

28. Each party shall bear its own costs and attorneys fees.

IT IS SO AGREED:

FOR THE RESPONDENT:

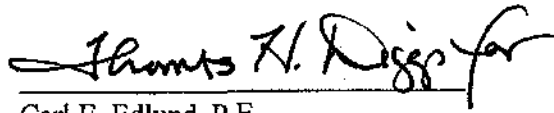
Date: 7-27-09



Chris Gibson,  
President  
Gibson Products, L.P.  
5691 Surrey Square Drive  
Houston, Texas 77017

FOR THE COMPLAINANT:

Date: 8/4/09



Carl E. Edlund, P.E.  
Director  
Multimedia Planning and Permitting Division  
U.S. EPA Region 6  
Dallas, TX 75214

**FINAL ORDER**

Pursuant to Section 325(c) of EPCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 11045(c), and the Consolidated Rules of Practice Governing the Administrative Assessment of Civil Penalties, 40 C.F.R. Part 22, the foregoing Consent Agreement is hereby ratified. This Final Order shall not in any case affect the right of EPA or the United States to pursue appropriate injunctive or other equitable relief or criminal sanctions for any violations of law. This Final Order shall resolve only those causes of action alleged in the Complaint. Nothing in this Final Order shall be construed to waive, extinguish or otherwise affect Respondent's (or its officers, agents, servants, employees, successors, or assigns) obligation to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations, including the regulations that were the subject of this action. The Respondent is ordered to comply with the terms of settlement and the civil penalty payment instructions as set forth in the Consent Agreement. In accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 22.31(b), this Final Order shall become effective upon filing with the Regional Hearing Clerk.

Dated August 6, 2007



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Michael C. Barra  
Regional Judicial Officer

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**


I hereby certify that on the 7th day of August, 2009, the original and one copy of the foregoing Complaint and Consent Agreement and Final Order ("Complaint and CAFO") was hand delivered to the Regional Hearing Clerk, U.S. EPA - Region 6, 1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200, Dallas, Texas 75202-2733, and a true and correct copy was delivered to the following individual(s) by the method indicated below:

**CERTIFIED MAIL RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED # 7007 2560 0000 4611 7512**

Chris Gibson,  
President  
Gibson Products, L.P.  
5691 Surrey Square Drive  
Houston, Texas 77017

**REGULAR MAIL**

Steve Williard  
The Williard Law Firm, L.P.  
1920 North Memorial Way, Suite 207  
Houston, TX 77007

  
Morton E. Wakeland, Jr., Ph.D.  
EPCRA 313 Enforcement and TRI Program  
Coordinator  
U.S. EPA Region 6  
Dallas, Texas

## ATTACHMENT 1

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR REMITTANCE BY ON-LINE CREDIT CARD OR BANK TRANSFER

1. Access Department of Treasury website at [www.pay.gov](http://www.pay.gov)  
You do not have to log-in, but you do have to register to pay this way!
2. At the "Find Public Forms" box, on left of screen, type in "sfo 1.1" without the quotes and click "Go."

Find Public Forms  
by Form Name  
by Agency Name  
Search Public Forms  
sfo 1.1 Go  
Searching Help

3. Two forms appear. Click the underlined link on the title of the top form, "EPA Miscellaneous Payments - Cincinnati Finance Center."
4. At the first selection option, insure you select that this payment is for a facility vs an

Results: 1-2 of 2  
Sort By: Form Name | Form Number | OMB Number | Agency Name Hide Details  
EPA Miscellaneous Payments - Cincinnati Finance Center View PDF  
Form Number: SFO Form Number 1.1  
Use this form to pay civil penalties, FOIA request, Superfund, Citations, Compliance Orders, and other miscellaneous payments  
Environmental Protection Agency  
<https://www.pay.gov/caygov/forms/forminstance.html?agencyFormId=11751879>

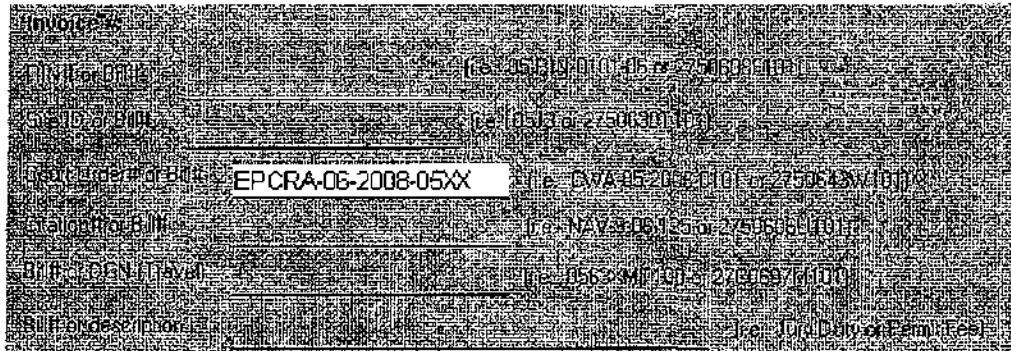
individual. Note that items identified with an asterisk are mandatory.

Individual or Business  Individual  Business

5. Debtor's name is the name of the facility named in the enforcement action. Fill in the facility's address, city, state, and zip code. Include your phone number to the facility and your facility email address.
6. For type of payment, on the pull down menu, select "Civil Penalty."

Type of Payment  
FOIA Request  
Superfund  
Civil Penalty  
Citation/Ticket  
Travel Reimbursement  
Travel Overpayment  
Other/Miscellaneous

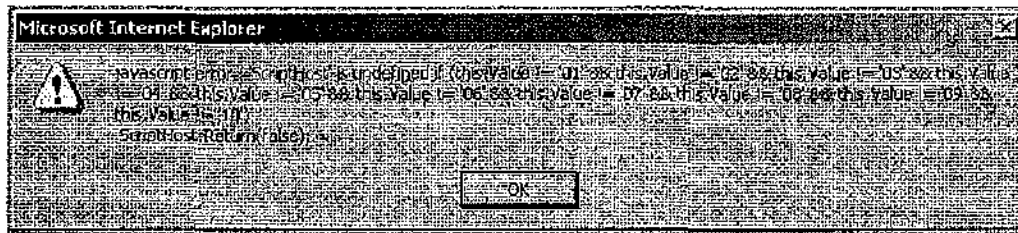
7. Next, enter the Invoice #. By selecting "Civil Penalty" above, the system will only allow you to enter Docket Number in the appropriate white box, entitled "Court Order # or Bill#." Note the format of the Docket Number and type it exactly as it appears on the enforcement action.



8. Type in the exact payment amount which appears in the enforcement action, select "No" for installments, and insert the number 6, for the Region in which the action was taken.

9. Insert any applicable comments regarding the payment, e.g., this is only the EPA's part, a SEP will be conducted "date." This is the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, or 4<sup>th</sup> installment payment of 4 consecutive payments.

10. Click "self payment" is applicable. A "javascript" error screen may appear when you click on "self payment." Simply click OK, then the "dot" will appear in self payment. Then click "submit data." If the "javascript" error appears again click OK and submit again.



11. The next screen is 1 of 3 where you will enter pertinent information about the method of payment. Follow screen directions.

