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REGIONAL HEARINGS CLERK
EPA REGION VI

UNITED STATES
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 6
DALLAS, TEXAS

IN THE MATTER OF:

A&B Environmental Services Inc.

RESPONDENT

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Consent Agreement and Final Order
USEPA Docket No. RCRA-06-2019-0940

CONSENT AGREEMENT AND FINAL ORDER

I. PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

1. This Consent Agreement and Final Order ("CAFO") is entered into by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6 ("EPA" or "Complainant") and Respondent, A&B Environmental Services Inc. ("Respondent" or "A&B Labs") and concerns the facility located at 10100 East Freeway, Suite 100, Houston, Texas, 77029 ("Facility").
2. Notice of this action has been given to the State of Texas, under Section 3008(a)(2) of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act ("RCRA"), 42 U.S.C. § 6928(a)(2)¹.

¹ On December 26, 1984, the State of Texas received final authorization for its basic Hazardous Waste Management Program (49 FR 48300). Subsequent revisions have been made to the Texas Hazardous Waste Program and authorized by the EPA. Except as otherwise provided, all citations found within this CAFO are to the "EPA-Approved Texas Statutory and Regulatory Requirements Applicable to the Hazardous Waste Management Program" dated November 2014, incorporated by reference under 40 C.F.R. § 272.2201(c)(1)(i) effective on February 26, 2016. 80 Fed. Reg. 80672 (December 28, 2015); 40 C.F.R. § 272.2201: Texas State-Administered Program: Final Authorization. References and citations to the "EPA-Approved Texas Statutory and Regulatory Requirements Applicable to the Hazardous Waste Management Program" may vary slightly from the State of Texas' published version. The corresponding C.F.R. citations are also provided.

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3. For the purpose of this CAFO, Respondent admits the jurisdictional allegations herein; however, Respondent neither admits nor denies the specific factual allegations and conclusions of law contained in this CAFO. This CAFO states a claim upon which relief may be granted.
4. The Respondent waives any right to contest the allegations and its right to appeal the proposed final order contained in this CAFO, and waives all defenses which have been raised or could have been raised to the claims in the CAFO.
5. The CAFO resolves only those violations which are alleged herein.
6. Respondent consents to the issuance of this CAFO as the most appropriate means of settling EPA's allegations without any adjudication of issues of law or fact, consents to the assessment and payment of the civil penalty in the amount and by the method set out in this CAFO, and consents to the compliance order in this CAFO.

II. JURISDICTION

7. This CAFO is issued by EPA pursuant to Section 3008(a) of RCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 6928, as amended by the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984 and is simultaneously commenced and concluded through the issuance of this CAFO under 40 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) §§ 22.13(b) and 22.18(b)(2) and (3).
8. Respondent agrees to undertake and complete all actions required by the terms and conditions of this CAFO. In any action by EPA or the United States to enforce the terms of this CAFO, Respondent agrees not to contest the authority or jurisdiction of EPA to issue or enforce this CAFO and agrees not to contest the validity of this CAFO or its terms or conditions.

III. FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

9. Respondent is a Corporation authorized to do business in the State of Texas.
10. Respondent is a "person" within the meaning of Section 1004(15) of RCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 6903(15), and 30 Texas Admin. Code § 335.2(25), [40 C.F.R. § 260.10].

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11. Respondent owns and operates the Facility.
12. The Facility is within North American Industrial Classification System code 541380 (Testing Laboratories).
13. The Facility is a "facility" within the meaning of 30 Texas Admin. Code § 335.1(60) [40 C.F.R. § 260.10].
14. From April through May of 2019, EPA conducted a RCRA record review of the Facility's activities as a generator of hazardous waste.
15. EPA discovered that Respondent generated, and offered for transport and treatment, hazardous wastes as defined in 30 Texas Admin. Code § 335.1 (70), [40 C.F.R. §§ 261.21, 261.22, 261.24, and 261.33].
16. Based on its review, EPA determined that Respondent generated the hazardous waste streams in quantities that exceeded the threshold amount of 100 kilograms of non-acute hazardous waste in a month, corresponding to Small Quantity Generator (SQG) status under 30 Texas Admin. Code, Chapter 335, Subchapter C, [40 C.F.R. Part 262], for the periods that such wastes remained onsite.
17. Respondent is a "generator" of "hazardous waste" as those terms are defined in 30 Texas Admin. Code §§ 335.1(66) & (70) [40 C.F.R. § 260.10].
18. As a generator of hazardous waste, Respondent is subject to Sections 3002 and 3010 of RCRA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 6922 and 6930, and the regulations set forth in 30 Texas Admin. Code Chapter 335, Subchapter C, [40 C.F.R. Part 262].

IV. VIOLATIONS

Claim 1: Notification Requirements

19. The allegations in Paragraphs 1-18 are re-alleged and incorporated herein by reference.

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20. Pursuant to Section 3010(a) of RCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 6930(a), and Texas Admin. Code § 335.6(c)

any person generating a hazardous waste in excess of 100 kilograms of hazardous waste in a month shall file with EPA or the authorized state a notification stating the location and general description of such activity and the identified characteristic or listed hazardous waste handled by such person.

21. Respondent generated hazardous waste in excess of 100 kilograms in a month during 2016.

22. Respondent did not file with the EPA or the State of Texas, an authorized state, an adequate and timely notification of its hazardous waste activities at the Facility during 2016 in violation of Section 3010(a) of RCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 6930(a) and 30 Texas Admin. Code § 335.6(c).

Claim 2: Failure to Meet the Standards of a Small Quantity Generator

23. The allegations in Paragraphs 1-18 are realleged and incorporated herein by reference.

24. Under 30 Texas Admin. Code § 335.78(b), [40 C.F.R. § 261.5], any person who generates in excess of 100 kilograms of hazardous waste in any given calendar month is a Small Quantity Generator of hazardous waste and is subject to the applicable requirements of 30 Texas Admin. Code § 335.

25. In 2016, the Facility exceeded its declared status and operated as a Small Quantity Generator of hazardous waste.

26. While operating the Facility as a Small Quantity Generator of hazardous waste, Respondent did not comply with one or more of the requirements for Small Quantity Generators under 30 Texas Admin. Code, Chapter 335, Subchapter C [40 C.F.R. § 262.34].

V. COMPLIANCE ORDER

27. Pursuant to RCRA § 3008(a), 42 U.S.C. § 6928(a), Respondent is hereby ordered to take the following actions, and within 60 calendar days of the effective date of this CAFO, Respondent shall provide in writing the following:

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- a. Respondent shall certify that it has assessed all of its solid waste streams at the Facility to determine the accurate waste codes and has developed and implemented standard operating procedures ("SOPs") to ensure that Respondent is operating the Facility in compliance with RCRA and the regulations promulgated thereunder, including, but not limited to, procedures for: (a) making hazardous waste determinations; (b) managing hazardous wastes; (c) reporting, transporting, and disposing of hazardous waste; (d) preparing its manifests; (e) meeting employee training requirements, (f) adequately preparing contingency plans, and (g) meeting the requirements of the land disposal restrictions.
- b. Respondent shall certify that it has accurately and adequately complied with the RCRA Section 3010 notification requirements for the Facility.
- c. Respondent shall provide, with its certification, a copy of Respondent's SOPs referenced above.
- d. Respondent shall provide with its certification the cost of implementing the requirements of this Order.
- e. Respondent shall provide the average amount, in kilograms, of hazardous waste that is properly managed per year at the Facility.

28. In all instances in which this CAFO requires written submission to EPA, the submittal made by Respondent shall be signed by an owner or officer of the Respondent and shall include the following certification:

"I certify under the penalty of law that this document and all its attachments were prepared by me or under my direct supervision in accordance with a system designed to assure that qualified personnel properly gathered and evaluated the information submitted. Based on my inquiry of the person or persons who manage the system, or those persons directly responsible for gathering the information, the information submitted is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true, accurate, and complete. I am

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aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fine and imprisonment for knowing violations."

Copies of all documents required by this CAFO shall be sent to the following:

U.S. EPA, Region 6
1201 Elm Street, Suite 500
Compliance Assurance and Enforcement Division (ECDST)
ATTN: David Riley
Dallas, Texas 75270-2102

Where required, notice shall be sent electronically by email to David Riley, at riley.david@epa.gov.

VI. TERMS OF SETTLEMENT

A. Penalty

29. Pursuant to the authority granted in Section 3008 of RCRA, 42 U.S.C. § 6928, and upon consideration of the enumerated statutory factors, the applicable penalty policies, and the entire record herein, including the above referenced Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is ordered that Respondent be assessed a civil penalty of \$11,330.00.
30. The penalty shall be paid within thirty (30) calendar days of the effective date of this CAFO and made payable to Treasurer, United States of America.
31. The following are Respondent's options for transmitting the penalties:

Checks sent via U.S. Postal Mail (including certified mail) or U.S. Postal Service Express

Mail should be remitted to:

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

Checks sent via Overnight Mail (non-U.S. Postal Service) should be remitted to:

U.S. Bank
Government Lockbox 979077
US EPA Fines and Penalties

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1005 Convention Plaza
SL-MO-C2-GL
St. Louis, MO 63101
314-418-1028

Wire Transfers should be remitted to:

Federal Reserve Bank of New York
ABA: 021030004
Account No. 68010727
SWIFT address = FRNYUS33
33 Liberty Street
New York, NY 10045

The case name and docket number (**In the Matter of A&B Environmental Services Inc.,**
Docket No. RCRA-06-2019-0940) shall be clearly documented on or within the chosen method
of payment to ensure proper credit.

32. The Respondent shall send a simultaneous notice of such payment to the following:

Lorena S. Vaughn
Regional Hearing Clerk (ORC)
1201 Elm Street, Suite 500
Office of Regional Council
Dallas, Texas 75270-2102

Mark Potts, Chief
Waste Enforcement Branch (ECDST)
Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division
1201 Elm Street, Suite 500
Dallas, Texas 75270-2102
Attention: David Riley

Respondent's adherence to this request will ensure proper credit is given when penalties are
received by EPA.

33. Pursuant to 31 U.S.C. § 3717 and 40 C.F.R. § 13.11, unless otherwise prohibited by law, EPA
will assess interest and late payment penalties on outstanding debts owed to the United States
and a charge to cover the cost of processing and handling a delinquent claim. Interest on the civil
penalty assessed in this CAFO will begin to accrue on the effective date of the CAFO and will be

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recovered by EPA on any amount of the civil penalty that is not paid within thirty (30) calendar days of the civil penalty's due date and will be assessed at the rate of the United States Treasury tax and loan rate in accordance with 40 C.F.R. § 13.11(a). Moreover, the costs of the Agency's administrative handling overdue debts will be charged and assessed monthly throughout the period the debt is overdue. 40 C.F.R. § 13.11(b). EPA will also assess a \$15.00 administrative handling charge for administrative costs on unpaid penalties for the thirty (30) day period after the payment is due and an additional \$15.00 for each subsequent thirty (30) day period the penalty remains unpaid. In addition, a penalty charge of up to six percent per year will be assessed monthly on any portion of the debt which remains delinquent more than ninety (90) days. 40 C.F.R. § 13.11(b). Should a penalty charge on the debt be required, it shall accrue from the first day payment is delinquent. 31 C.F.R. § 901.9(d). Other penalties for failure to make a payment may also apply.

B. Costs

34. Each party shall bear its own costs and attorney's fees. Furthermore, Respondent specifically waives its right to seek reimbursement of its costs and attorney's fees under the Equal Access to Justice Act (5 U.S.C. § 504), as amended by the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act (P.L. 04-121), and any regulations promulgated pursuant to those Acts.

C. Termination and Satisfaction

35. When Respondent believes that it has complied with all the requirements of this CAFO, including compliance with the Compliance Order and payment of the civil penalty, Respondent shall also certify this in writing and in accordance with the certification language set forth in Section V (Compliance Order). Unless EPA objects in writing within sixty (60) days of EPA's receipt of Respondent's certification, then this CAFO is terminated on the basis of Respondent's certification.

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D. Effective Date of Settlement

36. This CAFO shall become effective upon filing with the Regional Hearing Clerk.

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THE UNDERSIGNED PARTIES CONSENT TO THE ENTRY OF THIS CONSENT AGREEMENT AND FINAL ORDER:

FOR THE RESPONDENT:

Date: Oct 14, 2019



A&B Environmental Services Inc.

FOR THE COMPLAINANT:

Date: 10-18-19



Cheryl T. Seager
Director
Enforcement and
Compliance Assurance Division

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FINAL ORDER

Pursuant to the Consolidated Rules of Practice Governing the Administrative Assessment of Civil Penalties, 40 C.F.R. Part 22, the foregoing CAFO 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 herein. 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. Respondent is ordered to comply with the terms of settlement and the civil penalty payment instructions as set forth in the CAFO. Pursuant to 40 C.F.R. § 22.31(b) this Final Order shall become effective upon filing with the Regional Hearing Clerk.

Date: _____

10/23/19



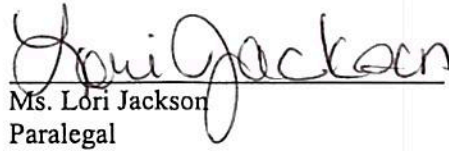
Thomas Rucki
Regional Judicial Officer

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on the 24th day of October, 2019, the original of the foregoing Consent Agreement and Final Order was hand delivered to the Regional Hearing Clerk, U.S. EPA - Region 6, 1201 Elm Street, Suite 500, Dallas, Texas 75270-2102, and that a true and correct copy of the CAFO was sent to the following by the method below:

CERTIFIED MAIL -- RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED 70092820000182843051


Ms. Lori Jackson
Paralegal