



Ohio

Environmental Protection Agency
Department of Agriculture
Department of Natural Resources



News Release

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Ohio Pig Farmer Sentenced to Prison, Fined \$51,750 for Clean Water Act Violation

COLUMBUS – William H. Ringler, the owner and operator of Steamtown Farm, a pig-feeding operation in Ashley, Ohio (Morrow and Delaware counties), was sentenced in United States District Court today to three months imprisonment, three months of electronic monitoring, a fine of \$51,750 and a restitution payment of \$17,250 to Ohio EPA for allowing an unpermitted discharge that killed more than 36,700 fish and other small aquatic animals in June 2007.

Thousands of gallons of liquid whey, a dairy by-product used as a food supplement, leaked twice in eight days from a tank on Ringler's farm, entering the farm's drainage system and flowing into the west branch of Alum Creek where it reduced dissolved oxygen levels.

In June 2010, Ringler pled guilty to one count under the federal Clean Water Act. U.S. Magistrate Judge Elizabeth Preston Deavers reviewed the plea agreement and accepted the proposed sentence. Ringler has already reimbursed Ohio EPA \$6,123 in emergency response costs and paid more than \$11,300 to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) for the cost of the dead fish and aquatic animals and ODNR's investigation.

Carter M. Stewart, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, Director Chris Korleski of Ohio EPA and Randall Ashe of U.S. EPA's Office of Criminal Enforcement commended the cooperative investigation by special agents from U.S. EPA's Criminal Investigation Division, Ohio EPA's Office of Special Investigations, ODNR's Division of Wildlife, the Ohio Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (Environmental Enforcement Unit) and Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Marous who prosecuted the case.

Incidents like this can be prevented when agricultural producers learn about regulations and best management practices. Technical and financial assistance is available from local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, The Ohio State University Extension Service and the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) Livestock Environmental Permitting Program (LEPP). For more information, contact ODA LEPP at (614) 387-0470 or lepp@agri.ohio.gov or a local soil and water conservation district. To report a spill, contact the 24-hour Ohio EPA hotline (1-800-282-9378).

Related court documents and the June 2010 news release are available at:
www.justice.gov/usao/ohs/press.html.

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