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Owner of water treatment company in Tumwater, Wash., pleads guilty, sentenced for falsification of public system water samples to lab after EPA OIG investigation

WASHINGTON – Clearwater Utility Services of Tumwater, Wash., and its owner pleaded guilty to their roles in defrauding state regulators and customers through the submittal of false water samples from a public water system to a laboratory for lead and copper testing.

Clearwater Utility Services was charged with a felony count of offering false instrument for filing or record. The owner, Timothy Tayne, was charged with one count of attempted offering false instrument for filing or record. Clearwater Utility Services was assessed a \$5,000 fine, while Tayne was sentenced to 364 days imprisonment and 80 hours of community service.

The investigation was led by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Inspector General in collaboration with Assistant Attorney General Robert Grant of the Washington State Environmental Protection Division. The U.S. EPA supports the Washington state public water system by awarding grants for supervising and managing public water systems.

“This case demonstrates the EPA Office of Inspector General’s commitment to investigate and prosecute crimes that involve the deliberate falsification of scientific data,” said Special Agent in Charge Garrett J. Westfall of the U.S. EPA OIG. “Without accurate information and data integrity, the EPA and its partners cannot make the best decisions based on science to protect human health and the environment.”

Anyone with knowledge of potential waste, fraud, and abuse relating to EPA operations and programs is encouraged to report it to the [OIG Hotline](#).

The OIG is an independent office within the EPA that performs audits, evaluations, and investigations of the EPA and the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, and their contractors, and prevents and detects fraud, waste and abuse. For more information, visit [our website](#) and follow the OIG on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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