

North Country Environmental Services, Inc. to pay \$1.9 million in settlement of solid waste facility violations

BETHLEHEM — Attorney General John M. Formella announced last week that North Country Environmental Services, Inc. ("NCES"), owner and operator of NCES Landfill in Bethlehem, New Hampshire, has entered into a consent decree with the State of New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES), agreeing to pay \$1.9 million in civil penalties.

"This consent decree constitutes the largest civil penalty ever obtained by the State for violations related to New Hampshire's Solid Waste Management Act," said Attorney General Formella. "Landfills are highly regulated and are designed and built to ensure safety to the public and the environment. This case demonstrates our commitment to holding accountable those that violate our statutes and rules created for the purpose of protecting the State's environment and natural resources."

The consent decree settles claims related to the placement of waste beyond permitted landfill limits, leachate discharges from the leachate collection system, prohibited storage of leachate within the primary leachate collection system, prohibited flow rate exceedances within the secondary leachate collection system, facility damage reporting, drilling of gas management wells through a landfill liner,

failure to appropriately apply adequate daily cover, incident reporting failures, and other related rule and permit violations.

"While we strive for waste reduction and diversion, New Hampshire residents and businesses will always generate some quantity of solid waste requiring disposal. For this reason, landfills are a necessary component of NH's integrated solid waste management infrastructure, and must be managed properly to protect public safety, human health, and the environment," said NHDES Commissioner Robert Scott. "NHDES takes landfill mismanagement very seriously, as demonstrated by this significant and appropriate civil penalty."

The complaint underlying the consent decree contains several categories of violations spanning multiple years and includes potential supplemental environmental projects with a nexus to solid waste landfills.

This case was handled in the New Hampshire Department of Justice by Assistant Attorney General Joshua Harrison and Senior Assistant Attorney General and Environmental Protection Bureau Chief, Christopher Aslin. NHDES worked extensively over multiple years to investigate these violations and collaborated with the Department of Justice to ensure accountability.

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