

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION**

**STAFF SUMMARY REPORT (Cecilio Felix)
MEETING DATE: August 13, 2008**

ITEM: 7

SUBJECT: **Hamming Plating Corporation, 890 Commercial St., Palo Alto – Adoption of Administrative Civil Liability Order for Late Submittal of Annual Report**

CHRONOLOGY: The Board has not previously considered this item.

DISCUSSION: We have prepared a Tentative Order (Appendix A) for the Board's consideration that would impose an administrative civil liability (ACL) of \$10,025 on the Hammon Plating Corporation for delinquent submittal of the annual report required by its NPDES permit to discharge industrial stormwater.

The Hammon Plating Corporation (the discharger) operates a metal plating facility which is a facility associated with industrial activity required by federal law to have a NPDES permit for discharge of stormwater. Accordingly, the facility is covered by the state Industrial Stormwater General Permit. The permit requires implementation of a stormwater pollution prevention plan to manage sources and activities at the facility that may pollute stormwater discharges, a monitoring program, and an annual comprehensive site compliance evaluation. The permit requires submittal of an annual report by July 1 of each year that provides certification that the stormwater pollution prevention plan has been implemented and a summary of the compliance evaluation and monitoring observations and samples results. The annual report must be signed and certified by a responsible corporate officer who performs decision making functions for the facility.

The discharger did not submit its 2006/07 annual report by July 1, 2007. Consequently, we issued two notice of noncompliance letters and contacted the discharger by phone. The discharger finally submitted the annual report on March 17, 2008, 261 days late. Because of the delinquent submittal of the annual report, which is the primary means of ensuring that the facility is in compliance with permit requirements, the Assistant Executive Officer issued an ACL Complaint to the Hammon Plating Corporation in the amount of \$10,025 (Appendix B).

The discharger submitted a letter (Appendix C) in response to the Complaint requesting a hearing to consider modification of the ACL amount. The letter acknowledges the reporting delinquency, and indicates that it was due to a personnel issue. However, this is not a viable excuse since the permit requires the discharger to ensure that its stormwater pollution prevention plan is up to date and is being implemented at all times. This includes ensuring that responsibility for its implementation is assigned to appropriate personnel. Upon discovery of a

personnel issue, a responsible corporate officer should have taking action in a timely manner to ensure compliance with permit requirements.

We acknowledge as pointed out in the letter that prior to this year the discharger had always submitted a timely annual report. However, such past performance does not justify subsequent noncompliance with permit requirements and no response to our noncompliance notices. The discharger also believes there was no benefit for failure to submit the annual report on time. We disagree. There was a cost saving for not preparing the report in a timely manner and the annual report eventually submitted was incomplete and did not include all compliance documentation. This also implies that monitoring and compliance evaluation was not conducted to the extent required by the permit and corrective actions were not implemented in a timely manner. The discharger also asserts that the proposed penalty is significant to its operations in the present economic environment but provides no documentation.

The proposed penalty is reasonable, accounts for cost savings by the discharger, and accounts for the eventual submittal of the required report as compared to other dischargers that failed to submit a report. It also accounts for our staff costs to prepare the Complaint and supporting information. It does not account for our staff costs associated with preparing documents and testimony for the hearing.

RECOMMEN-
DATION:

Prosecution staff recommends adoption of the Tentative Order. The Executive Officer who has had no involvement with the prosecution of this case will advise the Board at the hearing.

ATTACHMENTS Appendix A - Tentative Order
Appendix B - Administrative Civil Liability Complaint
Appendix C - Comment Letter in response to the ACL Complaint

File No. 2158.11 (CSF)

APPENDIX A

Tentative Order

APPENDIX B

Administrative Civil Liability Complaint

APPENDIX C

Comment Letter