



Public Interest Center | P.O. Box 1049 | Columbus, OH | 43216-1049

FOR RELEASE: February 23, 2011
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Court to Darke County Farmer: Pay \$5,000 Penalty, Restitution
Buckeye Farms Owner Pleads Guilty to Clean Water Act Violation

Hog nurseryman and Tilapia farmer Don Brewer, of 1438 New Weston-Fort Loramie Road, Ft. Recovery, has paid a \$1,500 fine and \$3,500 restitution to Ohio EPA as ordered by Darke County Municipal Court Judge Julie Monnin after non-permitted releases of manure and ammonia-saturated water flowed from Brewer's farm onto his neighbor's land and into the Wabash River.

On June 20, 2009, the Darke County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) discovered manure from the Brewer farm was entering an underground drain known as a field tile. The tile is designed to move storm water from the field to the Wabash River. The SWCD notified Ohio EPA and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

Ohio EPA staff responding discovered that manure appeared to have been pumped from the manure storage lagoon on the Brewer property to a weedy, overgrown area of the farm. Manure-laden water then ran onto the neighboring property. Over time, this has caused the adjoining property to lose crop production where the manure water has turned the field into a cattail area. Ohio EPA and the Bureau of Criminal Identification & Investigation (BCI&I) investigated the incident and referred the case to the Ohio Attorney General's Office for enforcement.

Uncontrolled release of wastewater and manure to waterways violates Ohio law. Farmers in the watershed and the Grand Lake/Wabash Watershed Alliance in the watershed are working together to use manure as fertilizer for row crops through the proper application to fields in a manner to avoid runoff into streams.

Questions about proper manure management in Darke County can be directed to the Darke County SWCD at (937) 548-1715 ext. 3.

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