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DHL Express Mismanaged Contaminated Storm Water Discharges

To resolve past violations associated with illegal discharges from Wilmington Air Park, 145 Hunter Drive, Wilmington (Clinton County) to Lytle and Cowen creeks and Indian Run, DHL Express has agreed to pay an \$80,000 penalty to Ohio EPA.

Three companies, Wilmington Air Park LLC, ABX Air and DHL Express, were involved in owning and operating the airport.

In 2003, Wilmington Air Park LLC (an affiliate of DHL Express) purchased the airport from Airborne Express. ABX Air then served as a contractor for DHL Express and provided DHL services at the airport. Until January 2009, the airport served as a hub for DHL Express' cargo handling, air transportation services and day-to-day operations.

Storm water management was one of the services ABX Air provided to DHL Express. The storm water management system collected and treated rain water, snow melt and liquids generated when aircraft and runways were de-iced during winter months.

In June 2004, DHL Express consolidated services and greatly increased the number of aircraft it operated in Wilmington including having earlier and later flights. This increased the amount of de-icing wastewater. The treatment system at the airport was not properly sized for the amount and concentration of wastewater it received and violated its discharge permit in 2007 and 2008. Biological surveys of the affected streams showed impacts from the pollution.

In May 2008, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and Ohio EPA investigated a fish/wildlife kill and chemical water quality standards violations in Cowan Creek. State officials believe that the fish kill and water quality standard violations resulted from the discharge of inadequately treated storm water.

That same month, DHL Express announced significant restructuring which culminated with the relocation of operations to the Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Airport.

While the overall number of flights into and out of the airport decreased significantly, in March 2009, storm water runoff leaked from the system and ended up on Cowan Creek through an under-drain pipe.

Of the \$80,000 penalty, \$32,000 will be used to administer surface water programs, \$32,000 will be go to Ohio EPA's Ohio [Environmental Education Fund](#) and \$16,000 will go to Ohio EPA's [Clean Diesel School Bus Fund](#).

-30-

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