



For Immediate Release
January 25, 2011

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OWNER AND OPERATOR OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES
CONVICTED OF CLEAN WATER ACT VIOLATIONS

Charges a Result of Sewerage Problems for Residents of Monroe, La.

Monroe, Louisiana: J. Jeffrey Pruett, 58, of West Monroe, Louisiana, has been convicted by a federal jury in Monroe, Louisiana, of violations of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, commonly referred to as the Clean Water Act, United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley announced today.

Pruett was Chief Executive Officer of LWC Management Company, Inc. (“LWC”), and Principal Officer of Louisiana Land & Water Company (“LLWC”), and was responsible for overseeing the operations and finances of both companies. Testimony during the trial showed that beginning in April 1999, Pruett and his companies provided sewer services to the Bayou Galion Subdivision, the Charmingdale Estates Subdivision, the Daywood and Donovan Woods Subdivision, the Love Estates Subdivision, and the Pine Bayou Subdivision (“Subdivisions”). Homeowners in these subdivisions were required to pay a fee for the sewerage service based upon rates set by the Louisiana Public Service Commission (“LPSC”). LWC and LLWC owned and operated wastewater treatment plants for the Subdivisions.

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (“LDEQ”) was authorized to administer and enforce the Clean Water Act requirements in the Subdivisions. Facilities that discharged

effluent from wastewater treatment plants were required to obtain state discharge permits and the Subdivisions were subject to the conditions set by those state permits. The permits required the Subdivisions to properly operate and maintain all facilities and systems of treatment and control and related appurtenances, provide adequate staff qualified to ensure that was done and ensure that the company complied with the amount and concentration limitations of pollutants that could be discharged to the waters of the United States. Testimony at trial further revealed that Pruett, LLWC and LWC knowingly violated the permit conditions for the Subdivisions.

Pruett and LLWC were found guilty of six felony violations of failure to maintain and provide records pertaining to all of the above-name Subdivisions. Pruett and LLWC were found guilty of one felony count of effluent violations pertaining to Love Estates Subdivision. Pruett was additionally found guilty of a misdemeanor/negligent count of failure provide proper operation and maintenance pertaining to the Pine Bayou Subdivision. The defendants were acquitted on the remaining counts.

Pruett is scheduled for sentencing on May 9, 2011. The maximum penalty for each felony violation is a term of imprisonment not more than 3 years, and a fine of not less than \$5,000 and not more than \$50,000, per day of violation, or both. The maximum sentence for the misdemeanor violation is a term of imprisonment of up to one year, and a fine of not less than \$2,500 and not more than \$25,000, per day of violation, or both.

United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley stated, "This conviction should send a message to individuals and companies alike that a disregard for the laws designed to protect the environment and the citizens of this community will not be tolerated. Our office is committed to prosecuting these types of cases."

Ivan J. Rikin, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, added: “What made this situation even worse is that the people most affected by the defendant’s actions are among those least able to fight them. Today’s jury conviction should send a clear message to other potential violators: noncompliance with the law will be prosecuted.”

Al Armendariz, Regional Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, further added: “The Environmental Protection Agency will vigorously enforce our nation’s laws to protect public health. This verdict, which is the result of cooperative efforts by State of Louisiana and EPA officials, ensures safe drinking water and proper wastewater treatment for residents.”

The case was investigated by Matthew Myles of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Maureen Kennedy of the Louisiana Department Environmental Quality, is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Earl M. Campbell and EPA Attorney Tom Walsh.

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