

Printing Company Sentenced for Making False Statements

On October 25, 2007, Ramallo Brothers Printing, Inc. (Ramallo Brothers), of San Juan, Puerto Rico, was convicted of making false statements to EPA and the Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board (EQB). The company was sentenced to 4 years of probation, a \$750,000 fine, and an \$800 special assessment. Subsequently, on February 27, 2008, Angel Ramallo-Diaz, former President and Chief Executive officer of the firm, was convicted of negligent discharge of a pollutant into waters of the United States and sentenced to 3 years of probation, a \$25,000 fine, and a \$25 special assessment. These judicial proceedings occurred in the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico.

Ramallo Brothers created a variety of wastes and byproducts from its printing business, including ink, which were placed in drums and transported to "La Finca" ("The Farm") on a regular basis. In September 2000, EPA requested information from Ramallo Brothers pertaining to the hazardous substances and industrial wastes that were used, stored, generated, disposed of, or otherwise handled by them at the La Finca location. In June 2001, Ramallo Brothers responded by telling EPA the company had not disposed of any industrial waste at La Finca even though they knew that they had placed, stored, handled, and disposed of industrial waste at the site.

In addition, in February 2005, EQB requested information and documents from Ramallo Brothers concerning the disposal of industrial liquid waste. In response to that request, Ramallo Brothers submitted fraudulent "dump tickets" or manifests reflecting the disposal of the liquid industrial waste at the Puerto Nuevo wastewater treatment plant, even though this plant was closed and not accepting industrial wastewater.

Angel Ramallo-Diaz was also the vice president of Caribbean Forms Manufacturing, Inc. (CFM). The CFM facility used a variety of inks and generated ink and other liquid wastewater. The facility included an outside wastewater storage tank that held the ink and other industrial wastewater. During an inspection at the facility in February 2004, EQB discovered a rupture in a pipe leading to the outside storage tank. The rupture allowed blue ink and other wastewater to leak onto the ground and saturate the area behind the facility. EQB determined that the discharge of ink and wastewater from the pipe reached the Loiza River via a creek that was located behind the manufacturing facility. Neither Ramallo nor CFM had a permit to discharge into the creek or the Loiza River. Ramallo failed to contain the release, thereby allowing the waste to enter into the ground water and the Loiza River.

This investigation was conducted with the EPA Criminal Investigation Division. (Case Cost: \$189,060)