

ILLINOIS POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
June 1, 2023

PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS,)
)
 Complainant,)
)
 v.) PCB 23-99
) (Enforcement - Air)
MOHAMMED ABDALLAH, an individual,)
)
 Respondent.)

ORDER OF THE BOARD (by M. Gibson):

On March 14, 2023, the Office of the Attorney General, on behalf of the People of the State of Illinois (People), filed a one-count complaint against Mohammed Abdallah (Abdallah). The complaint concerns Abdallah’s gasoline dispensing facility located at 8301 South Cottage Grove Avenue in Chicago, Cook County. The parties now seek to settle without a hearing. For the reasons below, the Board accepts the parties’ stipulation and proposed settlement.

Under the Environmental Protection Act (Act) (415 ILCS 5 (2020)), the Attorney General and the State’s Attorneys may bring actions before the Board on behalf of the People to enforce Illinois’ environmental requirements. *See* 415 ILCS 5/31 (2020); 35 Ill. Adm. Code 103. In this case, the People allege that Abdallah violated Section 9(a) of the Act (415 ILCS 5/9(a) (2020)) and Sections 218.586(i)(1)(B) and 218.586(i)(2)(C) of the Board Air Pollution Regulations (35 Ill. Adm. Code 218.586(i)(1)(B) and 218.586(i)(2)(C)) by failing to timely decommission its vapor collection and control system; failing to submit a decommissioning checklist, certification, and test results to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency; and causing, threatening, or allowing the discharge or emission of VOCs into the environment so as to violate Board regulations.

On April 7, 2023, the People and Abdallah filed a stipulation and proposed settlement, accompanied by a request for relief from the hearing requirement of Section 31(c)(1) of the Act (415 ILCS 5/31(c)(1) (2020)). This filing is authorized by Section 31(c)(2) of the Act (415 ILCS 5/31(c)(2) (2020)), which requires that the public have an opportunity to request a hearing whenever the State and a respondent propose settling an enforcement action without a public hearing. *See* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 103.300(a). The Board provided notice of the stipulation, proposed settlement, and request for relief. The newspaper notice was published in the *Chicago Sun-Times* on May 5, 2023. The Board did not receive any requests for hearing. The Board grants the parties’ request for relief from the hearing requirement. *See* 415 ILCS 5/31(c)(2) (2020); 35 Ill. Adm. Code 103.300(b).

Section 103.302 of the Board’s procedural rules sets forth the required contents of stipulations and proposed settlements. *See* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 103.302. These requirements

include stipulating to facts on the nature, extent, and causes of the alleged violations and the nature of Abdallah's operations. Section 103.302 also requires that the parties stipulate to facts called for by Section 33(c) of the Act (415 ILCS 5/33(c) (2020)), which bears on the reasonableness of the circumstances surrounding the alleged violations. Abdallah does not affirmatively admit the alleged violations. The stipulation also addresses the factors of Section 42(h) of the Act (415 ILCS 5/42(h) (2020)), which may mitigate or aggravate the civil penalty amount. Under the proposed settlement, Abdallah agrees to pay a civil penalty of \$5,000 within 30 days after the date of this order. The People and Abdallah have satisfied Section 103.302. The Board accepts the stipulation and proposed settlement.

This opinion constitutes the Board's findings of fact and conclusions of law.

ORDER

1. The Board accepts and incorporates by reference the stipulation and proposed settlement.
2. Abdallah must pay a civil penalty of \$5,000 no later than July 3, 2023, which is the first business day following the 30th day after the date of this order. Abdallah must pay the civil penalty by certified check or money order payable to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency for deposit into the Environmental Protection Trust Fund. The case name and case number must appear on the certified check or money order.
3. Abdallah must submit payment of the civil penalty to:

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Fiscal Services Division
1021 North Grand Avenue East
P.O. Box 19276
Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276

Abdallah must send a copy of the certified check or money order and any transmittal letter to:

Molly Kordas
Assistant Attorney General
Environmental Bureau
Illinois Attorney General's Office
69 W. Washington Street, 18th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60602

4. Penalties unpaid within the time prescribed will accrue interest under Section 42(g) of the Environmental Protection Act (415 ILCS 5/42(g) (2020)) at the rate set forth in Section 1003(a) of the Illinois Income Tax Act (35 ILCS 5/1003(a) (2020)).

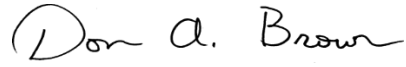
5. Abdallah must cease and desist from future violations of the Environmental Protection Act and Board regulations that were the subject of the complaint.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Section 41(a) of the Environmental Protection Act provides that final Board orders may be appealed directly to the Illinois Appellate Court within 35 days after the Board serves the order. 415 ILCS 5/41(a) (2020); *see also* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 101.300(d)(2), 101.906, 102.706. Illinois Supreme Court Rule 335 establishes filing requirements that apply when the Illinois Appellate Court, by statute, directly reviews administrative orders. 172 Ill. 2d R. 335. The Board's procedural rules provide that motions for the Board to reconsider or modify its final orders may be filed with the Board within 35 days after the order is received. 35 Ill. Adm. Code 101.520; *see also* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 101.902, 102.700, 102.702. Filing a motion asking that the Board reconsider this final order is not a prerequisite to appealing the order. 35 Ill. Adm. Code 101.902.

Names and Addresses for Receiving Service of Any Petition for Review Filed with the Appellate Court	
Parties	Board
Illinois Attorney General's Office Attn: Molly Kordas Assistant Attorney General Environmental Bureau 69 W. Washington Street, 18th Floor Chicago, Illinois 60602 Molly.Kordas@ilag.gov	Illinois Pollution Control Board Attn: Don A. Brown, Clerk 60 E. Van Buren St., Suite 630 Chicago, Illinois 60605 don.brown@illinois.gov
Attn: Mohammed Abdallah 11150 S. Harlem Avenue Worth, Illinois 60482 kort56@aol.com	
Attn: Mohammed Abdallah 43 Old Creek Road Palos Heights, IL 60464 aysar1967@icloud.com	
Sweis Law Firm Attn: David Sweis 53 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 360 Chicago, IL 60604-3785 david@sweislaw.com	

I, Don A. Brown, Clerk of the Illinois Pollution Control Board, certify that the Board adopted the above opinion and order on June 1, 2023, by a vote of 3-0.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Don A. Brown". The letters are fluid and connected, with a large initial "D" and "B".

Don A. Brown, Clerk
Illinois Pollution Control Board