

ILLINOIS POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

January 9, 2014

ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL	)	
PROTECTION AGENCY,	)	
	)	
Complainant,	)	
	)	
v.	)	AC 14-27
	)	(IEPA No. 338-13-AC)
STEVEN AND ANTHONY SOHN,	)	(Administrative Citation)
	)	
Respondent.	)	

ORDER OF THE BOARD (by D. Glosser):

On November 26, 2013, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Agency) timely filed an administrative citation against Steven and Anthony Sohn (respondents). The administrative citation concerns respondents facility located on the south side of 372nd Avenue, 1/4 mile west of the intersection of Perry Fishhook Road and 372nd Avenue, Fishhook, Pike County. The property is commonly known to the Agency as the “Fairmount Township/Sohn” site and is designated with Site Code # 14980600004. For the reasons below, the Board accepts respondents’ petition to contest the administrative citation, but directs respondents to file an amended petition to cure deficiencies identified in this order.

Under the Environmental Protection Act (Act) (415 ILCS 5 (2012)), an administrative citation is an expedited enforcement action brought before the Board seeking civil penalties that are fixed by statute. Administrative citations may be filed only by the Agency or, if the Agency has delegated the authority, by a unit of local government, and only for limited types of alleged violations. *See* 415 ILCS 5/21(o), 21(p), 22.51, 22.51a, 31.1(c), 42(b)(4), 42(b)(4-5), 55(k) (2012); 35 Ill. Adm. Code 108.

In this case, the Agency alleges that on October 10, 2013, respondents violated Section 21(p)(1) of the Act (415 ILCS 5/21(p)(1) (2012)) by causing or allowing open dumping in a manner resulting in litter. The Agency asks the Board to impose on respondent the statutory \$1,500 civil penalty for each alleged violation, for a total civil penalty of \$1,500.

As required, the Agency served the administrative citation on respondent within “60 days after the date of the observed violation.” 415 ILCS 5/31.1(b) (2012); *see also* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 101.300(c), 108.202(b). Any petition to contest the administrative citation was due by December 24, 2013. On December 24, 2013, Steven Sohn timely filed a petition (Pet.). *See* 415 ILCS 5/31.1(d) (2012); 35 Ill. Adm. Code 101.300(b), 108.204(b). A petition must set forth recognized grounds for why a respondent believes that the administrative citation was improperly issued. *See* Ill. Adm. Code 108.206. Those grounds are provided in Section 108.206 of the Board’s rules, and include:

- a) the respondent does not own the property,
- b) the respondent did not cause or allow the alleged violation,
- c) the citation was not timely filed or properly served, or
- d) the alleged violation was the result of uncontrollable circumstances. 35 Ill. Adm. Code 108.206. *See also* IEPA v. Bobby G. Myers and Donald D. Myers, AC 07-30, slip op. at 11 (May 21, 2009).

Although the Board accepts respondent's petition as timely filed, the Board finds that the petition is deficient. In the petition Steven Sohn asserts that, he will remove items from the property and asks for an extension until September 30, 2014, to perform the clean up. Pet. at 1. The Board notes that voluntary cleanups performed by a respondent are generally neither a defense to the violations alleged nor relevant to determining the civil penalty amount. *See* IEPA V. Jack Wright, AC 89-227, slip op. at 7 (Aug. 30, 1990) ("The Act, by its terms, does not envision a properly issued administrative citation being dismissed or mitigated because a person is cooperative or voluntarily cleans-up the site").

In addition, while an individual may represent himself before the Board, a non-attorney cannot represent another person in a Board adjudicatory proceeding, such as an administrative citation action. *See* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 101.400(a). The petition for review is signed only by Steven Sohn and not Anthony Sohn.

Deficiencies of the respondents' petition must be remedied before the case can be accepted for hearing. A petition must set forth recognized grounds for why a respondents believes that the administrative citation was improperly issued and must be signed by both individuals or an attorney. *See* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 108.206.

The Board therefore directs that the respondent file an amended petition with the Board that states one or more recognized grounds on which they contest the administrative citation. *See, e.g.,* County of Jackson v. Dan Kimmel, AC 06-21 (Feb. 16, 2006) (accepting as timely filed a petition that failed to include grounds for appeal but requiring an amended petition to cure the deficiency). In addition to filing an amended petition with the Board, respondents must serve a copy of the amended petition on the Agency and file proof of that service with the Board. *See* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 101.304. If no amended petition is filed with the Board by February 10, 2014, which is the first business day following the 30th day after the date of this order, respondent's petition will be dismissed and a default order will be entered against them, imposing the statutory \$1,500 civil penalty. *See* Ray Logsdon Estate, AC 05-54 (Apr. 21, 2005). If an amended petition is filed pursuant to this order and respondents do not prevail on the merits of the case, respondents will have to pay not only the civil penalty but also any hearing costs of the Board and the Agency. *See* 415 ILCS 5/42(b)(4-5) (2012); 35 Ill. Adm. Code 108.500. A schedule of the Board's hearing costs is available from the Clerk of the Board and on the Board's website at [www.icpb.state.il.us](http://www.icpb.state.il.us) *See* 35 Ill. Adm. Code 108.504.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

I, John T. Therriault, Clerk of the Illinois Pollution Control Board, certify that the Board adopted the above order on January 9, 2014, by a vote of 4-0.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John T. Therriault". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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John T. Therriault, Clerk  
Illinois Pollution Control Board