

# News Release

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## **DEQ Issues Stimson Lumber Co. \$14,600 in Penalties for Air and Water Quality Permit Violations at Gaston Mill**

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality has issued a total of \$14,600 in penalties to Stimson Lumber Co. for air and water quality permit violations at its wood products mill at 49800 Scoggins Valley Road in Gaston.

DEQ issued \$10,400 in penalties for Stimson Lumber's violations of its Title V air pollution discharge permit. The penalties included \$5,600 for failing to demonstrate compliance with plywood and composite wood products national emissions standards for hazardous air pollutants, and \$4,800 for operating a pollution control scrubber outside established operating ranges. In addition, DEQ issued a \$4,200 penalty for discharging wastewater from an unauthorized outlet pipe into Scoggins Creek, in violation of its wastewater discharge permit. The air quality permit violations occurred in 2009, while the water quality discharge violation occurred in February 2010.

DEQ issued the air quality penalties because pollution-emitting facilities must adhere to federal monitoring standards that ensure emissions of hazardous air pollutants are kept to minimum levels to protect the public, health and the environment. Monitoring those pollutants is an essential part of assuring that pollution control equipment at the facility is operating effectively and as designed. Many hazardous air pollutants emitted at the facility are known or suspected carcinogens and cause other serious health effects.

Violation of the mill's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit drew a penalty because discharge of untreated or partially treated wastewater to streams such as Scoggins Creek may negatively affect aquatic life and human health where contact or ingestion of the wastewater occurs. The mill's wastewater typically contains glues, high levels of suspended solids, and high levels of biochemical oxygen demand, which can reduce oxygen in the pollution-receiving stream and can potentially suffocate aquatic life.

Stimson Lumber Co. has until Oct. 22 to appeal the penalties.