



INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION OF NORTH DAKOTA

Jack Dalrymple
Governor

Wayne Stenehjem
Attorney General

Doug Goehring
Agriculture Commissioner

NEWS

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DICKINSON TRUCKER SENTENCED IN ILLEGAL DUMPING CASE

BISMARCK- A North Dakota truck driver, caught on surveillance footage, was sentenced Tuesday to one year in jail for illegally dumping salt water at a disposal well location.

Northwest District Judge Joshua Rustad suspended the sentence against Benjamin LeBaron, Dickinson, for one year on condition that LeBaron pay a \$500 fine, complete 50 hours of community service, reimburse the Oil and Gas Division for costs of \$450, pay court fees and costs of \$525, and have no other offenses. The judge also placed LeBaron on supervised probation for one year.

LeBaron had been charged with two counts of willfully violating environmental protection rules of the North Dakota Administrative Code under the jurisdiction of the Industrial Commission. Under a court-approved plea agreement, LeBaron pleaded guilty to a single count of the Class C felony.

Oasis Petroleum reported last August that surveillance equipment had recorded a driver dumping saltwater on the ground at one of the company's disposal sites in Williams County. LeBaron was charged after an investigation by the Oil and Gas Division and local law enforcement.

"This is a first-ever criminal conviction for violation of Industrial Commission rules," said Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem. "We want to send a message to those who violate North Dakota's laws; anyone intentionally polluting our environment will face serious consequences." Assistant Attorney General Hope Hogan prosecuted the case on behalf of the state.

"Illegal dumping will not be tolerated by the state of North Dakota," said Gov. Jack Dalrymple. "With the recent approval of additional enforcement staff for the Department of Mineral Resources as well as the Department of Health, we will continue to be vigilant in protecting our environment from people who choose to break the law."

"This case demonstrates the cooperation of the Oil and Gas Division and industry in enforcing state rules and protecting our environment," said Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring. "Information provided by Oasis Petroleum and Power Fuels enabled the Division to pursue this investigation and file charges."

LeBaron was an employee of Power Fuels at the time of the incident.

The Industrial Commission, consisting of Gov. Jack Dalrymple, Chairman, Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem and Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring, oversees the Department of Mineral Resources/Oil and Gas Division.

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