

ILLEGAL HAZARDOUS WASTE STORAGE RESULTS IN ONE YEAR PRISON TERM

A man who pleaded guilty to illegally storing hazardous waste received a sentence of one year in prison and three years on probation, according to a press release issued by the US Department of Justice (DOJ). The court also ordered him and his company jointly responsible for over \$1.4 million in restitution.



Failure to Dispose of Used Chemicals

According to DOJ's press release, the company used hazardous chemicals in its operation but instead of sending its used chemicals to a licensed disposal facility, it stored the hazardous waste in numerous drums and other containers, including a pit dug into the ground in the lower level of its building. Furthermore, the owner and the company stonewalled state efforts to get them to legally deal with the hazardous wastes. Ultimately, the EPA's Superfund program spent \$1,449,963.94 to clean up and dispose of the hazardous wastes.

History of Hazardous Waste Violations

DOJ's press release stated the owner knew the storage was illegal, because he had managed another company facility where he stored hazardous wastes illegally and because the state agency had sent numerous letters demanding the wastes be handled properly. Indeed, in 2005 he had pleaded guilty to a state criminal charge of illegally transporting hazardous waste.

Despite this history, the company allowed over 5,000 containers of waste to accumulate at the company's facility, which EPA eventually had to cleanup using money from the federal Superfund. As a result, DOJ brought federal criminal charges against the company and its owner. The restitution assessed at sentencing was based on the amount EPA spent in the cleanup.

For a copy of the press release

<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/michigan-company-and-its-owner-sentenced-illegally-storing-hazardous-waste>