

Court Bulletin Nouvelles judiciaires



Ministry of the
Environment

Ministère de
l'Environnement

For Immediate Release
November 28, 2008

GILLETTE FARMS INC. AND A.L. BLAIR CONSTRUCTION LIMITED FINED \$40,000 FOR LIQUID MANURE SPILL

L'ORIGINAL — On November 20, 2008, Gillette Farms Inc. pleaded guilty to failing to have an earthen manure storage lagoon designed by a professional engineer, and failing to have the lagoon inspected by a professional engineer upon completion of construction, contrary to the Nutrient Management Act.

A.L. Blair Construction Limited pleaded guilty to causing a discharge of liquid manure into the Little Castor River, which impaired the quality of water in the river, contrary to the Ontario Water Resources Act. Gillette Farms Inc. was fined \$10,000, and A.L. Blair Construction Limited was fined \$30,000, totalling \$40,000 plus a victim fine surcharge, for the offences. The companies were each given 12 months to pay the fine.

The Court heard that Gillette Farms Inc. operates a dairy farming business in Russell Township. A.L. Blair Construction Limited operates a road building, stone crushing, equipment rental and aggregate business in Moose Creek. Gillette Farms hired A.L. Blair Construction to build a new earthen lagoon for the storage of liquid manure on property it owns across the road from the dairy operation. The lagoon was built in a field with tile drains that were subsequently cut in the construction process. A.L. Blair rerouted pipes on the east side of the lagoon, but folded over and capped the pipes on the west side of the lagoon. In response to a complaint, the ministry confirmed on March 10, 2007, that manure had spilled into the Little Castor River. Provincial Officers traced the manure back to Gillette's storage lagoon, approximately eight kilometres upstream. The discharge, estimated to be between 400,000 to 600,000 litres of manure, came from the capped drainage tiles on the west side of the lagoon that had not been fully sealed by A.L. Blair.

Gillette Farms Inc. and A.L. Blair Construction were charged following an investigation by the Ministry of the Environment's Investigations and Enforcement Branch.

Members of the media:

Kate Jordan

Communications Branch

(416) 314-6696

Contact information for the general public:

416-325-4000 or 1-800-565-4923/

www.ontario.ca/environment