

Court Bulletin Nouvelles judiciaires



Ministry of the
Environment

Ministère de
l'Environnement

For Immediate Release
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BP CANADA ENERGY COMPANY FINED \$800,000 FOR VAPOUR DISCHARGE

SARNIA – On November 4, 2009, BP Canada Energy Company pleaded guilty to one count of causing an odorous discharge that caused or was likely to cause an adverse effect. The company was fined \$800,000 plus a victim fine surcharge and given 30 days to pay.

The Court heard that the company operates a facility in Sarnia that is a natural gas liquid fractionation plant which produces propane, butane, isobutane and production condensate. In March 2009, during functionality testing of the facility's valves, a vapour plume, lasting approximately ten minutes, traveled offsite in a northerly direction. Some Sarnia residents reported experiencing temporary physical symptoms as a result of the odour, such as headaches, sore throats and nausea. The discharge also caused disruptions to schools and businesses.

The company was charged following an investigation by the ministry's Investigations and Enforcement Branch.

The company pleaded guilty to discharging or causing or permitting the discharge of a contaminant, namely, natural gas vapours containing odorous sulphur compounds contrary to section 14(1) of the EPA thereby committing an offence under section 186(1) of the said Act.

The Honourable Mr. Justice Gary Hunter heard the case in the Ontario Court of Justice in Sarnia, Ontario and imposed sentence on November 4, 2009.

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