

**ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

IN THE MATTER OF:)	
)	
Valicor Environmental Services, LLC)	Consent Order No. [ORDER NUMBER]
107 Von Braun Drive)	
Huntsville, AL 35806)	
MADISON County, AL)	
)	
Permit No. IU084500552)	

PREAMBLE

This Special Order by Consent is made and entered into by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (“the Department”) and Valicor Environmental Services, LLC (hereinafter the “Permittee”) pursuant to the provisions of the Alabama Environmental Management Act, Ala. Code §§ 22-22A-1 to 22-22A-17, as amended, the Alabama Water Pollution Control Act (“AWPCA”), Ala. Code §§ 22-22-1 to 22-22-14 amended, and the regulations promulgated pursuant thereto.

STIPULATIONS

1. The Permittee operates a Centralized Wastewater Treatment (“CWT”) Facility (“the Facility”), known as Valicor Environmental Services, LLC located at 107 Von Braun Drive in the city of Huntsville, Madison County, Alabama.
2. The Department is a duly constituted department of the State of Alabama pursuant to Ala. Code §§ 22-22A-1 to 22-22A-17, as amended.
3. Pursuant to § 22-22A-4(n), Ala. Code as amended, the Department is the state agency responsible for the promulgation and enforcement of water pollution control regulations in accordance with the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, 33 U.S.C. §§ 1251 to 1388. In addition, the Department is authorized to administer and enforce the provisions of the AWPCA.
4. In accordance with ADEM Admin. Code chap. 335-6-5 and the AWPCA, the

Department issued State Indirect Discharge ("SID") Permit No. IU084500552 ("the Permit"), on August 29, 2017, effective September 1, 2017, establishing limitations on the discharges of pollutants from a point source designated therein as outfall number DSNS011, into the City of Huntsville Western Area Wastewater Treatment Plant (NPDES Permit AL0049531). The SID Permit requires that the Permittee monitor its discharges and submit periodic Discharge Monitoring Reports ("DMRs") to the Department describing the results of the monitoring. In addition, the Permit requires that the Permittee properly operate and maintain all facilities and systems of treatment and control which are installed or used by the Permittee to achieve compliance with the terms and conditions of the Permit.

5. The DMRs submitted to the Department by the Permittee indicate that the Permittee has discharged pollutants in violation of the limits imposed by Part I.A of the Permit. The effluent violations noted are listed in Attachment 1.

6. On February 15, 2018, the Department conducted a Compliance Sampling Inspection of the Facility. Sampling conducted by the Department during the inspection indicated that the Permittee exceeded the daily maximum permit limit for Total Copper in Part I.A. of the Permit. The Department's Copper result was 0.956 mg/l, above the permitted daily maximum limitation of 0.5 mg/l.

7. On October 30, 2018, the Department issued a Notice of Violation ("NOV") to the Permittee for the monitoring period of October 2016 to October 2018 for effluent limitation violations of the SID Permit.

8. On December 31, 2018, the Department received the Permittee's Engineering Report in response to the NOV. The Engineering Report stated that the Permittee had evaluated its current treatment practices, applied changes to its standard operating procedures, and provided additional training to employees on those changes. The Engineering Report indicated the Permittee should be in compliance with the SID Permit by April 2019.

9. Permit condition 1.B.1 states, "The permittee shall not discharge or, in any manner, introduce into the publically owned treatment works any pollutant(s) which, alone or in

conjunction with a discharge or discharges from other sources, causes pass through or interference or in any other manner adversely impacts the operation or performance of the treatment works, to include the method of sludge disposal in use by the publically owned treatment works.”

10. Permit condition 1.B.2.c states, “The permittee shall not discharge or, in any manner, introduce any of the following pollutants into the publically owned treatment works: Solid or viscous pollutants in amounts which may cause obstruction to the flow in sewers, or other interference in the treatment works”

11. Permit Condition 1.B.2.h states “The permittee shall not discharge or, in any manner, introduce any of the following pollutants into the publically owned treatment works: Petroleum oil, biodegradable cutting oil, or products of mineral oil origin in amounts that will cause pass through or interference.”

12. On January 18, 2019, the City of Huntsville Water Pollution Control issued a Termination of Service letter to the Permittee. The letter indicated that the Permittee’s discharge of waters and waste were having a deleterious effect on the sanitary sewer system. The letter stated, “[o]n Friday, January 11th 2019, WPC found deleterious discharge coming from Valicor during an inspection. Samples were obtained for analysis and a collection system investigation was ordered for Monday, January 14th 2019. During the collection system investigation it was deemed necessary to seal off Valicor’s sewer access due to signs of corrosion, build up, and oily waste residue directly downstream from Valicor’s waste stream. In total, the Valicor discharge impacts approximately 18,000 feet of sanitary sewer and has hindered operation of the Indian Creek Lift Station by leaving a thick blanket of residue.” The Permittee violated Permit Condition 1.B.1, and 1.B.2.c and h, by introducing pollutants into a publicly owned treatment works (“POTW”) which caused interference in the POTW.

13. The Permittee consents to abide by the terms of this Consent Order and to pay the civil penalty assessed herein.

14. The Department has agreed to the terms of the Consent Order in an effort to resolve the violations cited herein without the unwarranted expenditure of State resources in further prosecuting the alleged violations. The Department has determined that the terms contemplated in the Consent Order are in the best interests of the citizens of Alabama.

CONTENTIONS

Pursuant to Ala. Code § 22-22A-5(18)c., as amended, in determining the amount of any penalty, the Department must give consideration to the seriousness of the violation, including any irreparable harm to the environment and any threat to the health or safety of the public; the standard of care manifested by such person; the economic benefit which delayed compliance may confer upon such person; the nature, extent, and degree of success of such person's efforts to minimize or mitigate the effects of such violation upon the environment; such person's history of previous violations; and the ability of such person to pay such penalty. Any civil penalty assessed pursuant to this authority shall not exceed \$25,000.00 for each violation, provided however, that the total penalty assessed in an order issued by the Department shall not exceed \$250,000.00. Each day that such violation continues shall constitute a separate violation. In arriving at this civil penalty (summarized in Attachment #2), the Department has considered the following:

A. **SERIOUSNESS OF THE VIOLATIONS AND BASE PENALTY:** Based on information available to the Department, violations of the Permit, ADEM Admin. Code chap. 335-6-5, and the AWPCA were noted. The Department considered the general nature of each violation, the magnitude and duration of each non-compliant discharge, the characteristics of each pollutant discharged, the condition of the receiving waters, the violations' effects, if any, on the receiving waters, and any available evidence of irreparable harm to the environment or threat to the public.

B. **THE STANDARD OF CARE:** In consideration of the standard of care manifested by the Permittee, the Department has enhanced the penalty based on this factor.

C. **ECONOMIC BENEFIT WHICH DELAYED COMPLIANCE MAY HAVE CONFERRED:** The Department has considered that delayed compliance may have conferred an

economic benefit upon the Permittee but is unable to estimate the economic benefit associated with the violations cited above, as the costs for compliance are not available.

D. EFFORTS TO MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF THE VIOLATION UPON THE ENVIRONMENT: The Department is unaware of any efforts by the Permittee to minimize or mitigate the effects of the violations upon the environment.

E. HISTORY OF PREVIOUS VIOLATIONS: The Permittee has a history of previous violations. In consideration of such history of previous violations, the Department has enhanced the penalty.

F. THE ABILITY TO PAY: The Permittee has not alleged an inability to pay the civil penalty.

G. This Special Order by Consent is a negotiated settlement and, therefore, the Department has compromised the amount of the penalty the Department believes is warranted in this matter in the spirit of cooperation and desire to resolve this matter amicably, without incurring the unwarranted expense of litigation.

H. The civil penalty is summarized in Attachment 2.

ORDER

THEREFORE, the Permittee, along with the Department, desires to resolve and settle the compliance issues cited above. The Department has carefully considered the facts available to it and has considered the six penalty factors enumerated in Ala. Code § 22-22A-5(18)c., as amended, as well as the need for timely and effective enforcement, and the Department believes that the penalty assessed below and the following conditions are appropriate to address the violations alleged herein. Therefore, the Department and the Permittee (collectively "Parties") agree to enter into this CONSENT ORDER with the following terms and conditions:

A. The Permittee shall pay to the Department a civil penalty in the amount of \$20,500 in settlement of the violations alleged herein within forty-five days after issuance of this Consent Order. Failure to pay the civil penalty within forty-five days after issuance may result in the

Department's filing a civil action in the Circuit Court of Montgomery County to recover the civil penalty.

B. All penalties due pursuant to this Consent Order shall be made payable to the Alabama Department of Environmental Management by certified or cashier's check and shall be remitted to:

Office of General Counsel
Alabama Department of Environmental Management
P.O. Box 301463
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-1463

C. The Permittee shall prepare and submit to the Department, not later than 180 days after the issuance of this Consent Order, an Engineering Report that identifies the potential causes of noncompliance and summarizes an investigation of the changes made or that are necessary for the Permittee to achieve and maintain compliance with the Permit. The Engineering Report shall include a Compliance Plan with a schedule for implementation of necessary corrective actions and cost of such necessary corrective actions, if known. At a minimum, the Permittee shall consider each of the following in making its investigation: the need for changes in maintenance and operating procedures; the need for modification of existing treatment and collection system works; and the need for new or additional treatment and collection system works. The Engineering Report shall be prepared by a professional engineer licensed to practice in the State of Alabama. If the Department determines through its review of the submitted Engineering Report that the Report is not sufficient, then the Report shall be modified accordingly. The Permittee shall submit modifications to the Engineering Report, if required, so that they are received by the Department no later than thirty days after receipt of the Department's comments. The Permittee shall complete implementation of the recommendations made in the Engineering Report not later than 510 days after the issuance of this Consent Order.

D. The Permittee shall prepare and submit progress reports to the Department describing in detail the Permittee's progress towards achieving compliance with the items presented in the Compliance Plan, including the cost of necessary corrective actions. The Permittee shall submit such reports so that they are received by the Department sixty days after

the issuance of this Consent Order and continuing every sixty days thereafter that the Permittee's performance obligations under this Consent Order remain incomplete. In addition, no later than fourteen days following each applicable due date herein, the Permittee shall submit to the Department a written notice of noncompliance with the requirements of that paragraph, if applicable. Notices of noncompliance shall state the causes of noncompliance, the corrective action taken, and shall describe the Permittee's ability to comply with any remaining requirements of this Consent Order.

E. The Permittee shall comply with all terms, conditions, and limitations of the Permit immediately upon the issuance of this Consent Order.

F. The Permittee shall submit a certification to the Department, signed by a professional engineer licensed to practice in the State of Alabama, indicating whether the Permittee is in compliance with all requirements of this Consent Order. The Permittee shall submit such certification so that it is received by the Department no later than 540 days after issuance of this Consent Order.

G. After the issuance date of this Consent Order, the Permittee shall pay stipulated penalties for each day it fails to meet any of the written submittal milestone dates or satisfy any of the requirement dates contained herein. The stipulated civil penalties for failure to meet each milestone or any requirement date, except for *Force Majeure* acts as hereinafter defined, shall be as follows:

<u>Period of Noncompliance</u>	<u>Penalty per Day per Violation</u>
1st to 30th day	\$ 100.00
31st to 60th day	\$ 200.00
After 60 days	\$ 300.00

If the Permittee fails to meet any milestone or any assigned date ninety days after the required dates found in Paragraphs C, D, and F the Department reserves the right to file a new action against the Permittee.

H. Should violations continue to occur after the issuance of this Consent Order or as stipulated in Paragraph G above, then the Department may issue an additional order or file suit against the Permittee in the Circuit Court of Montgomery County or other court of competent jurisdiction to enforce compliance of this Consent Order.

I. Payment of stipulated penalties for violations of milestone dates under this Consent Order are due no later than the 28th day of the month following the month a milestone date was not achieved. Notification to the Permittee by the Department of the assessment of any stipulated penalty is not required.

J. This Consent Order shall apply to and be binding upon both Parties, their directors, officers, and all persons or entities acting under or for them. Each signatory to this Consent Order certifies that he or she is fully authorized by the Party he or she represents to enter into the terms and conditions of this Consent Order, to execute the Consent Order on behalf of the Party represented, and to legally bind such Party.

K. Subject to the terms of these presents and subject to provisions otherwise provided by statute, this Consent Order is intended to operate as a full resolution of the violations cited in this Consent Order.

L. The Permittee it is not relieved from any liability if it fails to comply with any provision of this Consent Order.

M. For purposes of this Consent Order only, the Department may properly bring an action to compel compliance with the terms and conditions contained herein in the Circuit Court of Montgomery County. In any action brought by the Department to compel compliance with the terms of this Agreement, the Permittee shall be limited to the defenses of *Force Majeure*, compliance with this Agreement and physical impossibility. A *Force Majeure* is defined as any event arising from causes that are not foreseeable and are beyond the reasonable control of the Permittee, including its contractors and consultants, which could not be overcome by due diligence (i.e., causes which could have been overcome or avoided by the exercise of due diligence will not be considered to have been beyond the reasonable control of the Permittee) and which

delays or prevents performance by a date required by the Consent Order. Events such as unanticipated or increased costs of performance, changed economic circumstances, normal precipitation events, or failure to obtain federal, state, or local permits shall not constitute *Force Majeure*. Any request for a modification of a deadline shall be accompanied by the reasons (including documentation) for each extension and the proposed extension time. The Permittee shall submit this information so that it is received by the Department a minimum of ten working days prior to the original anticipated completion date. If the Department, after review of the extension request, finds the work was delayed because of conditions beyond the control and without the fault of the Permittee, the Department may extend the time as justified by the circumstances. The Department may also grant any other additional time extension as justified by the circumstances, but it is not obligated to do so.

N. The sole purpose of this Consent Order is to resolve and dispose of all allegations and contentions stated herein concerning the factual circumstances referenced herein. Should additional facts and circumstances be discovered in the future concerning the Facility which would constitute possible violations not addressed in this Consent Order, then such future violations may be addressed in other orders as may be issued by the Director, by litigation initiated by the Department, or by such other enforcement action as may be appropriate. The Permittee shall not object to such future orders, litigation or enforcement action based on the issuance of this Consent Order if such future orders, litigation or other enforcement action addresses new matters not raised in this Consent Order.

O. This Consent Order shall be considered final and effective immediately upon signature of all Parties. This Consent Order shall not be appealable, and the Permittee does hereby waive any hearing on the terms and conditions of same.

P. This Consent Order shall not affect the Permittee's obligation to comply with any Federal, State, or local laws or regulations.

Q. Final approval and entry into this Consent Order are subject to the requirements that the Department provide notice of proposed orders to the public, and that the public have at least thirty days within which to comment on the proposed Consent Order.

R. Should any provision of this Consent Order be declared by a court of competent jurisdiction or the Environmental Management Commission to be inconsistent with Federal or State law and therefore unenforceable, the remaining provisions hereof shall remain in full force and effect.

S. Any modification of this Consent Order shall be agreed to in writing and signed by both Parties.


T. Except as otherwise set forth herein, this Consent Order is not and shall not be interpreted to be a permit or modification of an existing permit under Federal, State or local law, and shall not be construed to waive or relieve the Permittee of its obligation to comply in the future with any permit.

Executed in duplicate, with each part being an original.

VALICOR ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES LLC

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

EXECUTED AND ISSUED:

By:  _____

By: _____

Its: General manager _____

Its: _____

Date: 10/07/2020 _____

Date: _____

Valicor Environmental Services LLC
SID Permit No. IU084500552

Attachment 1: Effluent Violations

Monitoring Period	Outfall	Parameter	Limit	Reported	Unit	Violation Type
January 2019	S011	Oil & Grease	100	106	mg/l	Monthly Average
April 2019	S011	Fluoranthene	0.0268	0.041	mg/l	Monthly Average
April 2019	S011	Fluoranthene	0.0537	0.0775	mg/l	Maximum Daily
November 2019	S011	Copper, Total (As Cu)	0.242	1.24	mg/l	Monthly Average
November 2019	S011	Copper, Total (As Cu)	0.5	4.58	mg/l	Maximum Daily
November 2019	S011	N-Octadecane	0.589	0.623	mg/l	Maximum Daily
December 2019	S011	Copper, Total (As Cu)	0.5	0.687	mg/l	Maximum Daily
January 2020	S011	O-Cresol	0.561	0.871	mg/l	Monthly Average
January 2020	S011	O-Cresol	1.92	5.96	mg/l	Maximum Daily
March 2020	S011	Copper, Total (As Cu)	0.242	0.620	mg/l	Monthly Average
March 2020	S011	Copper, Total (As Cu)	0.5	2.53	mg/l	Maximum Daily
March 2020	S011	Zinc, Total (As Zn)	2.61	2.935	mg/l	Maximum Daily

Attachment 2: Penalty Synopsis

Attachment 2

**Valicor Environmental Services
Huntsville, Madison County
IU084500552**

Violation*	Number of Violations*	(A)	(B)	(C)
		Seriousness of Violation*	Standard of Care*	History of Previous Violations*
Effluent Violations	12	\$ 9,800.00	\$ -	\$ 1,200.00
Discharge Causing POTW Interference	1	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	
		\$19,800.00	\$5,000.00	\$1,200.00
		Total (A)	Total (B)	Total (C)

Additional Adjustments due to negotiations, receipt of additional information, or public comment

Mitigating Factors (-)	
Economic Benefit (+)	
Ability to Pay (-)	
Other Factors (+/-)	-\$5,500.00
Total Adjustments (+/-)	



Base Penalty Total [Total (A) + Total (B) + Total (C)]	\$26,000.00
Mitigating Factors (-)	
Economic Benefit (+)	
Ability to Pay (-)	
Other Factors (+/-)	-\$5,500.00
INITIAL PENALTY	\$20,500.00
Total Adjustments (+/-)	\$0.00
FINAL PENALTY	\$20,500.00

Footnotes

*See the "Stipulations" and "Contentions of the Department" portion of the Order for a detailed description of each violation and the penalty factors