

**ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

IN THE MATTER OF:

**Clean Earth of Alabama, Inc.  
Glencoe, Etowah County, Alabama  
USEPA ID Number ALD981020894**

Consent Order No. 23-XXX-CHW

**PREAMBLE**

This Special Order by Consent is made and entered into by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (“the Department” or “ADEM”) and Clean Earth of Alabama, Inc. (“Clean Earth”) pursuant to the provisions of the Alabama Environmental Management Act, Ala. Code §§ 22-22A-1 to 22-22A-17, as amended, and the Alabama Hazardous Wastes Management and Minimization Act (“AHWMMA”), Ala. Code §§ 22-30-1 to 22-30-24, as amended, and the regulations promulgated pursuant thereto.

**STIPULATIONS**

1. Clean Earth operates a permitted commercial hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facility (the “Facility”) with EPA Identification Number ALD981020894, located at 402 Webster Chapel Road in Glencoe, Etowah County, Alabama. Clean Earth, as a result of its operations at the Facility, was a permitted hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facility, a large quantity generator of hazardous waste, a used oil generator, a large quantity handler of universal wastes, and a universal waste transporter, as those terms are defined in ADEM Admin. Code Div. 14, at all times relevant to this action.

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 Ala. Code § 22-22A-4(n), the Department is the state agency responsible for the promulgation and enforcement of solid and hazardous waste regulations in accordance with the federal Solid Waste Disposal Act §§ 1002 to 11012, 42 U.S.C. §§ 6901 to 6992k, as amended.

In addition, the Department is authorized to administer and enforce the provisions of the AHWMMA, Ala. Code §§ 22-30-1 to 22-30-24, as amended.

### **DEPARTMENT'S CONTENTIONS**

4. On June 22, 2022, a representative of the Department's Industrial Hazardous Waste Branch conducted a compliance evaluation inspection ("CEI") of Clean Earth. The CEI and a review of Clean Earth's compliance showed the following:

(a) Pursuant to Permit Condition III.C.3., the sampling and staging of incoming containers shall not exceed 72 hours. All containers that are to be fingerprinted or are awaiting analysis shall be segregated from other containers in the container storage area. Each container shall be marked with the date of receipt.

Clean Earth failed to mark approximately twenty-four hazardous waste containers with the date of receipt. These containers had been onsite for more than 72 hours.

(b) Pursuant to Permit Condition III.L.2., a container holding hazardous waste must always be closed during storage, except when it is necessary to add, remove, sample, or inspect the waste.

Clean Earth failed to close one 5-gallon hazardous waste container located in Building #1.

(c) Pursuant to Permit Condition III.E.2., the permittee shall maintain an impervious coating which is free of cracks, gaps, or other deterioration on all containment system surfaces which may be exposed to hazardous waste or hazardous constituents (or release of hazardous wastes or hazardous constituents).

Clean Earth failed to maintain an impervious coating on containment system surfaces. The coating on the floor of the secondary containment system for the Receiving Area, Main Warehouse, Pump-Up Area, and Building #3 had gaps and cracks and was not impervious.

(d) Pursuant to Permit Condition III.L.6., an appropriate hazardous waste label will be affixed to each container. The label will include, at a minimum, the date the container was

received and all appropriate EPA hazardous waste numbers associated with the hazardous waste in the container as specified in 335-14-2-.03 and 335-14-2-.04 (or other information that provides a clear indication of the type(s) of hazardous waste and the hazard(s) associated with the waste).

Clean Earth failed to mark an identification of hazards on approximately twelve hazardous waste containers.

(e) Pursuant to Permit Condition III.J., if a container holding hazardous waste is not in good condition (e.g., severe rusting, apparent structural defects) or if it begins to leak, upon discovery the permittee shall immediately transfer the hazardous waste from such container to a container that is in good condition or otherwise manage the waste in compliance with the conditions of ADEM. Admin. Code r. 335-14-5-.09(2).

Clean Earth failed to transfer hazardous waste from a leaking container to a container that is in good condition. One 275-gallon hazardous waste tote was leaking onto the floor of the secondary containment system for Building #3.

5. On July 26, 2022, the Department issued a Notice of Violation to Clean Earth, which cited violations of the Facility Permit that were discovered during the CEI.

6. On September 12, 2022, the Department received Clean Earth's response to the aforementioned Notice of Violation.

7. Pursuant to Ala. Code § 22-22A-5(18), as amended, in determining the amount of any penalty, the Department must give consideration to the seriousness of the violation(s), 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(s) 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 such a violation continues shall constitute a separate violation. In arriving at this civil penalty, the Department has considered the following:

(a) **SERIOUSNESS OF THE VIOLATIONS:** In determining the seriousness of the violations, the Department considered the general nature and magnitude of the violations along with the available evidence of irreparable harm to the environment and threat to the health or safety of the public.

(b) **STANDARD OF CARE:** In considering the standard of care manifested by Clean Earth, the Department noted that the violations described above were non-technical and easily avoidable. Consequently, Clean Earth failed to exhibit a standard of care commensurate with the applicable regulatory standards.

(c) **ECONOMIC BENEFIT WHICH DELAYED COMPLIANCE MAY HAVE CONFERRED:** The Department has determined that there was no significant economic benefit gained by Clean Earth as a result of the violations referenced herein.

(d) **EFFORTS TO MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF THE VIOLATION UPON THE ENVIRONMENT:** There are no known environmental effects to mitigate as a result of the alleged violations.

(e) **HISTORY OF PREVIOUS VIOLATIONS:** Based on a review of Department records, Clean Earth has a history of violations and the penalty reflects that history.

(f) **ABILITY TO PAY:** The Department does not have any evidence indicating that Clean Earth is unable to pay the civil penalty.

(g) **OTHER FACTORS:** It should be noted that this Special Order by Consent is a negotiated settlement and, therefore, the Department has compromised the amount of the penalty that is warranted in the spirit of cooperation and the desire to resolve this matter amicably without incurring the unwarranted expense of litigation (see Attachment A, which is made a part of the Department's Contentions).

8. The Department neither admits nor denies Clean Earth's contentions, which are set forth below. The Department has agreed to the terms of this Special Order by Consent in an effort to resolve the alleged 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 this Special Order by Consent are in the best interest of the citizens of Alabama.

### **FACILITY'S CONTENTIONS**

9. Clean Earth neither admits nor denies the Department's contentions. Clean Earth consents to abide by the terms of this Special Order by Consent and to pay the civil penalty assessed herein.

### **ORDER**

Therefore, without admitting that it has violated any statutes or regulations, Clean Earth, along with the Department, desires to resolve and settle the alleged violations 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. The Department believes that the following conditions are appropriate to address the violations alleged herein. Therefore, the Department and Clean Earth agree to enter into this Special Order by Consent with the following terms and conditions:

A. Clean Earth agrees to pay to the Department a civil penalty in the amount of \$9,200 in settlement of the violations alleged herein within forty-five days of the effective date of this Special Order by Consent. Failure to pay the civil penalty within forty-five days from the effective date may result in the Department's filing a civil action in the Circuit Court of Montgomery County to recover the civil penalty.

B. Clean Earth agrees that all penalties due pursuant to this Special Order by Consent shall be made payable to the Alabama Department of Environmental Management by certified or cashier's check or other payment methods acceptable to the Department and shall be remitted to:

Office of General Counsel

Alabama Department of Environmental Management

P.O. Box 301463

Any payment submitted to the Department pursuant to this Special Order by Consent shall reference Clean Earth's name and address, and the ADEM Administrative Order number of this action.

C. Clean Earth agrees that, independent of this Special Order by Consent, Clean Earth shall comply with all terms, conditions, and limitations of the AHWMMA, Ala. Code §§ 22-30-1 to 22-30-24, as amended, and the regulations promulgated pursuant thereto.

D. The Department and Clean Earth ("parties") agree that this Special Order by Consent 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 Special Order by Consent certifies that he or she is fully authorized by the party he or she represents to enter into the terms and conditions of this Special Order by Consent, to execute the Special Order by Consent on behalf of the party represented, and to legally bind such party.

E. The parties agree that, subject to the terms of these provisions and subject to provisions otherwise provided by statute, this Special Order by Consent is intended to operate as a full resolution of the alleged violations cited herein.

F. Clean Earth agrees that it is not relieved from any liability if it fails to comply with any provision of this Special Order by Consent.

G. For purposes of this Special Order by Consent only, Clean Earth agrees that the Department may properly bring an action to compel compliance with the terms and conditions contained herein in the Circuit Court of Montgomery County.

H. The parties agree that the sole purpose of this Special Order by Consent 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 which would constitute possible violations not addressed in this Special Order by Consent, then such future violations may be addressed in orders as may be issued by the Director, litigation initiated by the Department, or such other enforcement actions as may be appropriate. Clean Earth agrees not to object to such future orders, litigation, or enforcement actions based on the issuance of this

Special Order by Consent if future orders, litigation, or other enforcement actions address new matters not raised in this Special Order by Consent.

I. The parties agree that this Special Order by Consent shall be considered final and effective immediately upon signature of all parties. This Special Order by Consent shall not be appealable, and Clean Earth does hereby waive any hearing on the terms and conditions of this Special Order by Consent.

J. The parties agree that this Special Order by Consent shall not affect Clean Earth's obligation to comply with any federal, State, or local laws or regulations.

K. The parties agree that final approval and entry into this Special Order by Consent is subject to the requirements that the Department give notice of proposed orders to the public, and that the public have at least thirty days within which to comment on the order.

L. The parties agree that, should any provision of this Special Order by Consent 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.

M. The parties agree that any modifications of this Special Order by Consent must be agreed to in writing signed by both parties.

N. The parties agree that, except as otherwise set forth herein, this Special Order by Consent 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 Clean Earth of its obligations to comply in the future with any permit.

Executed in duplicate, with each part being an original.

**CLEAN EARTH OF ALABAMA, INC.**

**ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

Brad Phillips  
(Signature of Authorized Representative)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lance R. LeFleur  
Director

Brad Phillips  
(Printed Name)

General Manager  
(Printed Title)

12-20-2022  
(Date Signed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date Executed)



**Attachment A**

Clean Earth of Alabama, Inc.  
Glencoe, Etowah County  
Facility ID No. ALD981020894

<b>Violation</b>	<b>Number of Violations*</b>	<b>Seriousness of Violation*</b>	<b>Standard of Care*</b>	<b>History of Previous Violation*</b>	
Failure to mark hazardous waste containers with the date of receipt	1	\$500	\$250	\$250	
Failure to keep containers of hazardous waste closed	1	\$500	\$250	\$0	
Failure to maintain impervious coatings on all containment system surfaces	1	\$5,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	
Failure to mark containers of hazardous waste with identification of hazardous	1	\$500	\$250	\$0	
Failure to transfer hazardous waste from a leaking container to a container that is in good condition	1	\$1,000	\$500	\$500	<b>Total of Three Factors</b>
<b>TOTAL PER FACTOR</b>		\$7,500	\$2,250	\$1,750	\$11,500

Adjustments to Amount of Initial Penalty

Economic Benefit (+)	\$0
Mitigating Factors (-)	\$0
Ability to Pay (-)	\$0
Other Factors (+/-)	-\$2,300

Amount of Initial Penalty	\$11,500
Total Adjustments (+/-)	-\$2,300
<b>FINAL PENALTY</b>	<b>\$9,200</b>

Footnotes

\* See the "FINDINGS" portion of the Order for a detailed description of each violation and the penalty factors.