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## **Ohio EPA, Sewer Association Settle Water Pollution Violations in Washington County**

In a [settlement with Ohio EPA](#), White Oak Sewer Association Inc. agreed to eliminate unauthorized discharges into the South Fork of Wolfe Creek from its wastewater discharge plant near State Routes 500 and 339 in Barlow Township by connecting to the Washington County collection system.

Ohio EPA issued the Association a wastewater discharge permit for a plant to serve a residential, apartment and commercial complex, consisting of approximately 25 residences and an assisted living home. Months prior to the permit expiring in 2008, Ohio EPA inspected the plant and sent the Association a letter.

In violation of permit requirements, the Association failed to submit monthly discharge monitoring reports, employ an appropriate certified operator and maintain the plant in good working order. Ohio EPA recommended the Association speak with the Washington County Commissioners about connecting to its collection system 100 feet from the plant.

The Association responded quickly by cleaning vegetation from the sand filters and discussing the matter with a commissioner. However, Ohio EPA did not receive the monitoring reports. Additionally, the Association did not file a renewal permit application in time. After the application was received in 2009, Ohio EPA inspected the plant and found repeat violations, as well as failure to properly operate an aeration tank blower. The blower was quickly repaired and filters cleaned, but when Ohio EPA inspected the plant again a few months later, the plant was not found to be in good operational condition. Raw sewage was discharging into the creek.

The Association agreed to connect to the county's collection system within 90 days of receiving the county's consent and no later than Dec. 19, 2012. Connecting to the sewers should take approximately 45 days, according to the county's sewer consultant. The Association also agreed to abandon its plant and clean the area, with Ohio EPA plan approval.

The Association also agreed to pay a \$10,000 penalty. A portion of the civil penalty (\$2,000) will go to Ohio EPA's [Clean Diesel School Bus Program](#) Fund. This fund helps retrofit older school buses with pollution control equipment to reduce particulate emissions from their diesel engines and thereby protect the children who ride the buses. The remaining \$8,000 will be split equally between the Ohio Environmental Education Fund and the administration of surface water programs.

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