

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (EXCERPT)
Act 451 of 1994

324.63223 Civil action; commencement; jurisdiction; relief; fine; violation as felony; penalties; lien.

Sec. 63223. (1) The department may request the attorney general to commence a civil action for appropriate relief, including a permanent or temporary injunction, for a violation of this part or a provision of a permit or order issued or rule promulgated under this part. An action under this subsection may be brought in the circuit court for the county of Ingham or for the county in which the defendant is located, resides, or is doing business. The court has jurisdiction to restrain the violation and to require compliance. In addition to any other relief granted under this subsection, the court may impose a civil fine of not less than \$2,500.00, and the court may award reasonable attorney fees and costs to the prevailing party. The maximum fine imposed by the court shall be not more than \$25,000.00 per day of violation.

(2) Upon a finding by the court that an operator has violated this part or a provision of a permit or order issued or rule promulgated under this part, and that the violation poses or posed a substantial endangerment to the public health, safety, or welfare, the court shall impose, in addition to the sanctions set forth in subsection (1), a fine of not less than \$500,000.00 and not more than \$5,000,000.00.

(3) The attorney general may file a civil suit in a court of competent jurisdiction to recover, in addition to a fine, the full value of the injuries done to the natural resources of this state and the costs of surveillance and enforcement by the state resulting from the violation.

(4) A person who on or after February 1, 2005 intentionally makes a false statement, representation, or certification in an application for or form pertaining to a permit under this part or in a notice or report required by the terms and conditions of a permit issued under this part is guilty of a felony and may be imprisoned for not more than 2 years and shall be fined not less than \$2,500.00 or more than \$25,000.00 for each violation. If the conviction is for a violation committed after a first conviction of the person under this subsection, the court shall impose a fine of not less than \$25,000.00 per day and not more than \$50,000.00 per day of violation. With the exception of the issuance of criminal complaints, issuance of warrants, and the holding of an arraignment, the circuit court for the county in which the violation occurred has exclusive jurisdiction. Knowledge possessed by a person other than the defendant under this subsection may be attributable to the defendant if the defendant took affirmative steps to shield himself or herself from the relevant information.

(5) Upon a finding by the court that the actions taken by a criminal defendant on or after February 1, 2005 pose or posed a substantial endangerment to the public health, safety, or welfare, the court shall impose, in addition to the penalties set forth in subsection (2), a sentence of 5 years' imprisonment and a fine of not less than \$1,000,000.00.

(6) To find a defendant civilly or criminally liable for substantial endangerment under subsection (2) or (5), the court shall determine that the defendant knowingly or recklessly acted in such a manner as to cause a danger of death or serious bodily injury and that either of the following occurred:

(a) The defendant had an actual awareness, belief, or understanding that his or her conduct would cause a substantial danger of death or serious bodily injury.

(b) The defendant acted in gross disregard of the standard of care that any reasonable person should observe in similar circumstances.

(7) A civil fine or other civil award imposed under this section is payable to this state and shall be credited to the general fund. The fine constitutes a lien on any property, of any nature or kind, owned by the defendant.

(8) A lien under subsection (7) is effective and has priority over all other liens and encumbrances except those filed or recorded prior to the date of judgment only if notice of the lien is filed or recorded as required by state or federal law.

(9) A lien filed or recorded pursuant to subsection (8) shall be terminated according to the procedures required by state or federal law within 14 days after the fine or other award ordered to be paid is paid.

(10) If a violation of this part also constitutes a violation of another part of this act, a court may apply a civil fine or penalty for the violation, and each day of continued violation, in accordance with and subject to the penalty limits of the other part.

History: Add. 2004, Act 449, Imd. Eff. Dec. 27, 2004.

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