

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE & INSPECTION

IN RE: **Mohamed Amer**  
**MCA Enterprises, Inc.**

FILE NO.: UST 2013-131-00613

**NOTICE OF VIOLATION**

A. Introduction

Pursuant to Sections 42-17.1-2(21) and 42-17.6-3 of the Rhode Island General Laws, as amended, ("R.I. Gen. Laws") you are hereby notified that the Director of the Department of Environmental Management (the "Director" of "DEM") has reasonable grounds to believe that the above-named parties ("Respondents") have violated certain statutes and/or administrative regulations under DEM's jurisdiction.

B. Facts

- (1) The subject property is located at 514 Greenville Avenue, Assessor's Plat 48, Lot 356 in the town of Johnston, Rhode Island (the "Property"). The Property includes a convenience store, a motor fuel filling station and underground storage tanks (the "Facility").
- (2) Mohamed Amer owns the Property.
- (3) MCA Enterprises, Inc. operates the Facility.
- (4) The Respondents are the owner and operator of underground storage tanks ("USTs" or "tanks") that are located on the Property, which tanks are used for storage of petroleum products and which are subject to the DEM's *Rules and Regulations for Underground Storage Facilities Used for Petroleum Products and Hazardous Materials* (the "UST Regulations").
- (5) The Facility is registered with the DEM in accordance with Section 6.00 of the DEM's UST Regulations and is identified as UST Facility No. 00613.
- (6) On or about 8 March 2013, the DEM issued a letter to all registered UST owners/operators that required the owners/operators to inspect their facility and complete and submit to the DEM a Compliance Certification Checklist, a Certification Statement form and any necessary Return to Compliance Plans (the "Compliance Certification Forms") by 30 June 2013.

- (7) On or about 10 July 2013, the DEM sent a second written notice to all non-compliant registered UST owners/operators requiring submission of the Compliance Certification Forms by 31 July 2013.
- (8) On 7 November 2013 DEM issued a Notice of Intent to Enforce (“NIE”) by certified mail to the Respondents. The NIEs were delivered to the Respondents on 8 November 2013. The NIE required the Respondents to inspect the Facility and complete and submit the Compliance Certification Forms to DEM within 15 days of receipt of the NIE.
- (9) As of the date of this Notice of Violation (“NOV”), the Respondents have not submitted the Compliance Certification Forms to the DEM.

C. Violation

Based on the foregoing facts, the Director has reasonable grounds to believe that you have violated the following statutes and/or regulations:

- (1) **DEM’s UST Regulations, Rule 8.03** – requiring UST owners/operators to inspect their facility and complete and submit the Compliance Certification Forms within the time frame specified by the DEM.

D. Order

Based upon the violations alleged above and pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws Section 42-17.1-2(21), you are hereby ORDERED to **within 30 days of receipt of the NOV**, submit the Compliance Certification Forms to the DEM in accordance with Rule 8.03 of the DEM’s UST Regulations.

E. Penalty

- (1) Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws Section 42-17.6-2, the following administrative penalty, as more specifically described in the attached penalty summary and worksheets, is hereby ASSESSED, jointly and severally, against each named respondent:

**Four Thousand Dollars (\$4,000.00)**

- (2) The proposed administrative penalty is calculated pursuant to the DEM’s *Rules and Regulations for Assessment of Administrative Penalties*, as amended, and must be paid to the DEM within thirty 30 days of your receipt of this NOV. Payment shall be in the form of a certified check, cashiers check or money order made payable to the “General Treasury - Water & Air Protection Program Account” and shall be forwarded to the DEM Office of Compliance and Inspection, 235 Promenade Street, Suite 220, Providence, Rhode Island 02908-5767.

- (3) Penalties assessed against the Respondents in this NOV are penalties payable to and for the benefit of the State of Rhode Island and are not compensation for actual pecuniary loss.
- (4) If any violation alleged herein shall continue, then each day during which the violation occurs or continues shall constitute a separate offense and the penalties and/or costs for that violation shall continue to accrue in the manner set forth in the attached penalty summary and worksheets. The accrual of additional penalties and costs shall be suspended if the DEM determines that reasonable efforts have been made to comply promptly with this NOV.

F. Right to Administrative Hearing

- (1) Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws Chapters 42-17.1, 42-17.6, 42-17.7 and 42-35, each named respondent is entitled to request a hearing before the DEM Administrative Adjudication Division regarding the allegations, orders and/or penalties set forth in Sections B through E above. All requests for hearing MUST:
  - (a) Be in writing. See R.I. Gen. Laws Sections 42-17.1-2(21)(i) and 42-17.6-4(b);
  - (b) Be **RECEIVED** by DEM's Administrative Adjudication Division, at the following address, within 20 days of your receipt of this NOV. See R.I. Gen. Laws Sections 42-17.1-2(21)(i) and 42-17.7-9:

Administrative Clerk  
DEM - Administrative Adjudication Division  
One Capitol Hill, 2<sup>ND</sup> Floor  
Providence, RI 02903

- (c) Indicate whether you deny the alleged violations and/or whether you believe that the administrative penalty is excessive. See R.I. Gen. Laws Section 42-17.6-4(b); **AND**
  - (d) State clearly and concisely the specific issues which are in dispute, the facts in support thereof and the relief sought or involved, if any. See Rule 7.00(b) of the DEM Administrative Rules of Practice and Procedure for the Administrative Adjudication Division of Environmental Matters.
- (2) A copy of each request for hearing must also be forwarded to:

Joseph J. LoBianco, Esquire  
DEM - Office of Legal Services  
235 Promenade Street, Suite 425  
Providence, RI 02908-5767

- (3) Each named respondent has the right to be represented by legal counsel at all administrative proceedings relating to this matter.

- (4) Each respondent must file a separate and timely request for an administrative hearing before DEM's Administrative Adjudication Division as to each violation alleged in the written NOV. If any respondent fails to request a hearing in the above-described time or manner with regard to any violation set forth herein, then this NOV shall automatically become a Final Compliance Order enforceable in Superior Court as to that respondent and/or violation and any associated administrative penalty proposed in the NOV shall be final as to that respondent. See R.I. Gen. Laws Sections 42-17.1-2(21)(i) and (v) and 42-17.6-4(b) and (c).
- (5) Failure to comply with this NOV may subject each respondent to additional civil and/or criminal penalties.
- (6) An original signed copy of this NOV is being forwarded to the town of Johnston wherein the Property is located to be recorded in the Office of Land Evidence Records pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws Chapter 34-13 and Section 42-17.1-2 (31), as amended.
- (7) This NOV does not preclude the Director from taking any additional enforcement action nor does it preclude any other local, state, or federal governmental entities from initiating enforcement actions based on the acts or omissions described herein.

If you have any legal questions, you may contact (or if you are represented by an attorney, please have your attorney contact) Joseph J. LoBianco at the DEM Office of Legal Services at (401) 222-6607 extension 2305. All other inquiries should be directed to Tracey Tyrrell of the DEM Office of Compliance and Inspection at (401) 222-1360 ext. 7407.

Please be advised that any such inquiries do not postpone, eliminate, or otherwise extend the need for a timely submittal of a written request for a hearing, as described in Section F above.

FOR THE DIRECTOR

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David E. Chopy, Chief  
DEM Office of Compliance and Inspection

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_  
the within Notice of Violation was forwarded to:

Mohamed Amer  
514 Greenville Avenue  
Johnston, RI 02919

MCA Enterprises, Inc.  
c/o Mohamed Amer, Registered Agent  
514 Greenville Avenue  
Johnston, RI 02919

by Certified Mail.

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## ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY SUMMARY

Program: OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE AND INSPECTION, UST

File No.: UST 2013-131-00613

Respondents: Mohamed Amer and MCA Enterprises, Inc.

GRAVITY OF VIOLATION					
SEE ATTACHED "PENALTY MATRIX WORKSHEETS."					
VIOLATION No. & CITATION	APPLICATION OF MATRIX		PENALTY CALCULATION		AMOUNT
	Type	Deviation	Penalty from Matrix	Number or Duration of Violations	
C (1) – Failure to submit ERP Compliance Certification Forms	Type II (\$12,500 Max. Penalty)*	Moderate	\$4,000	1 violation	\$4,000.00
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>					<b>\$4,000.00</b>

\*Maximum Penalties represent the maximum penalty amounts per day, per violation.

### ECONOMIC BENEFIT FROM NONCOMPLIANCE

COSTS OF COMPLIANCE, EQUIPMENT, O&M, STUDIES OR OTHER DELAYED OR AVOIDED COSTS, INCLUDING INTEREST AND/OR ANY COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE DERIVED OVER ENTITIES THAT ARE IN COMPLIANCE. NOTE: ECONOMIC BENEFIT MUST BE INCLUDED IN THE PENALTY UNLESS:

- THERE IS NO IDENTIFIABLE BENEFIT FROM NONCOMPLIANCE; OR
- THE AMOUNT OF ECONOMIC BENEFIT CAN NOT BE QUANTIFIED.

A review of the record in this matter has revealed that the Respondents have either enjoyed no identifiable benefit from the non-compliance alleged in this enforcement action or that the amount of economic benefit that may have resulted cannot be quantified.

### COST RECOVERY

ADDITIONAL OR EXTRAORDINARY COSTS INCURRED BY THE DIRECTOR DURING THE INVESTIGATION, ENFORCEMENT AND RESOLUTION OF AN ENFORCEMENT ACTION (EXCLUDING NON-OVERTIME PERSONNEL COSTS), FOR WHICH THE STATE IS NOT OTHERWISE REIMBURSED.

A review of the record in this matter has revealed that the DEM has not incurred any additional or extraordinary costs during the investigation, enforcement and resolution of this enforcement action (excluding non-overtime personnel costs), for which the State is not otherwise reimbursed.

**TOTAL PENALTY PROPOSED UNDER PENALTY REGULATIONS = \$4,000.00**

**PENALTY MATRIX WORKSHEET**

CITATION: *Failure to submit ERP Compliance Certification Forms*  
 VIOLATION NO.: C (1)

<b>TYPE</b>		
<u>      </u> <b>TYPE I</b> <u>DIRECTLY</u> related to protecting health, safety, welfare or environment.	<u>  <b>X</b>  </u> <b>TYPE II</b> <u>INDIRECTLY</u> related to protecting health, safety, welfare or environment.	<u>      </u> <b>TYPE III</b> <u>INCIDENTAL</u> to protecting health, safety, welfare or environment.
<b>DEVIATION FROM THE STANDARD</b>		
THE DEGREE TO WHICH A PARTICULAR VIOLATION IS OUT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENT VIOLATED.		
<p><b>FACTORS CONSIDERED:</b></p> <p>Taken from Section 10 (a) (2) of the DEM <i>Rules and Regulations for Assessment of Administrative Penalties</i></p> <p>(A) <b>The extent to which the act or failure to act was out of compliance:</b> The Respondents failed to submit completed Compliance Certification Forms to the DEM. The DEM's UST Regulations require all UST owners/operators to certify their compliance with the DEM's UST Regulations by completing and submitting the Compliance Certification Forms at least once every three years. The ERP compliance certification process is of significant importance to the regulatory program.</p> <p>(B) <b>Environmental conditions:</b> Considered, but not utilized for this calculation.</p> <p>(C) <b>Amount of the pollutant:</b> Considered, but not utilized for this calculation.</p> <p>(D) <b>Toxicity or nature of the pollutant:</b> The volatile nature of gasoline presents both a public health hazard (due to the potential inhalation of benzene) and a public safety hazard (due to the potential for explosion). Petroleum products are capable of causing significant soil and groundwater contamination if released to the environment.</p> <p>(E) <b>Duration of the violation:</b> 7½ months. The Compliance Certification Forms were due by 30 June 2013.</p> <p>(F) <b>Areal extent of the violation:</b> Considered, but not utilized for this calculation.</p>		
(continued)		

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- (G) **Whether the person took reasonable and appropriate steps to prevent and/or mitigate the noncompliance:** The Respondents failed to prevent the non-compliance by submitting completed Compliance Certification Forms to the DEM. The Respondents have made no apparent attempt to mitigate the violation despite receiving an informal written notice from the DEM dated 7 November 2013 requiring that they do so.
- (H) **Whether the person has previously failed to comply with any regulations, order, statute, license, permit or approval issued or adopted by the Department, or any law which the Department has the authority or responsibility to enforce:** The Respondents were previously cited by the DEM for this same violation in a Notice of Violation (NOV) issued on 23 November 2010. The Respondents and the DEM entered a Consent Agreement on 25 October 2011 to resolve the NOV.
- (I) **The degree of willfulness or negligence, including but not limited to, how much control the violator had over the occurrence of the violation and whether the violation was foreseeable:** The Respondents had full control over the occurrence of the violation. The DEM issued letters to all the UST owners/operators on or about 8 March 2013 requiring the owners/operators to comply with the ERP compliance certification rule by 30 June 2013. On or about 10 July 2013 the DEM issued letters to all the UST owners/operators who failed to comply and provided the owners/operators an additional 30 days to comply. The DEM also issued an informal written notice to the Respondents by certified mail on 7 November 2013 requiring that they comply within 15 days of receipt of the notice. The notices were delivered to the Respondents; however, the Respondents failed to comply.
- (J) **Any other factor(s) that may be relevant in determining the amount of a penalty:** Considered, but not utilized for this calculation.

<b>MAJOR</b>	<u>  <b>X</b>  </u> <b>MODERATE</b>	<b>MINOR</b>
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Penalty Matrix where the applicable statute provides for a civil penalty up to \$ 25,000		TYPE I	TYPE II	TYPE III
DEVIATION FROM STANDARD	MAJOR	\$12,500 to \$25,000	\$6,250 to \$12,500	\$2,500 to \$6,250
	<b>MODERATE</b>	\$6,250 to \$12,500	\$2,500 to \$6,250 <b>\$4,000</b>	\$1,250 to \$2,500
	MINOR	\$2,500 to \$6,250	\$1,250 to \$2,500	\$250 to \$1,250