



Office of the State Fire Marshal

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DEKALB COUNTY COURT IMPOSES PENALTIES OF \$1.3 MILLION FOR GAS STATION VIOLATIONS

SPRINGFIELD – The Office of the State Fire Marshal (“OSFM”) announced today that on August 12, 2016, a DeKalb County Circuit Court issued a Default Judgment Order against an Illinois corporation and its president totaling \$1,362,000 for violations of the Gasoline Storage Act at a closed gas station in DeKalb operated by the corporation. The Court ordered that Sultan Petroleum of Illinois, Inc. (“Sultan Petroleum”) shall pay \$681,000 in civil fines and penalties for the infractions and that Saad Sindhu, president of Sultan Petroleum and the site’s landowner, shall also pay \$681,000 in civil fines and penalties. The order came in response to the defendants’ failure to remove four abandoned underground petroleum storage tanks at the station, along with other violations of the Gasoline Storage Act.

“Leaving tanks unattended is risky to the public and to the environment,” said State Fire Marshal Matt Perez. “When facilities and their owners choose to not properly clean up and dispose of their tanks, they need to be held accountable for their actions. That is what this judgment does.”

The abandoned station was last in operation in July 2011. The corporation’s employees and officers refused to remove the four underground storage tanks, one of which was a 32-year-old condemned tank. The tanks posed a risk to public safety due to the potential for environmental contamination to soil and water. Sultan Petroleum and Saad Sindhu repeatedly failed to respond to OSFM enforcement notices directing them to correct numerous violations at the facility and remove the storage tanks, as well as provide the required documentation for the underground storage tanks and facility.

The OSFM requested that the Office of the Attorney General file a civil lawsuit against the defendants in July 2015. A lawsuit was filed and the defendants failed to enter notices of appearance. A Default Judgment Order was subsequently entered, imposing \$1,362,000 in penalties and fines against Sultan Petroleum as the operator of record and against Saad Sindhu as president of Sultan Petroleum and the landowner responsible for the facility. The penalties and fines were assessed for the ongoing violations of OSFM Administrative Orders regarding rules concerning technical and safety requirements for the operation and proper temporary closure of underground storage tanks.

A copy of the Default Judgment Order is available upon request. 615**16