



Calif AG: Wins \$19.5 Million Court Judgment Vs Shell Gas Stations

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By Cassandra Sweet, Of DOW JONES NEWSWIRES

SAN FRANCISCO -(Dow Jones) - A California court has ordered gasoline stations owned by units of Royal Dutch Shell PLC, (RDSA, RDSB, RDSB.LN) to pay California agencies \$19.5 million for violating the state's hazardous waste and underground fuel storage laws, the state attorney general said Friday.

The ruling adopts a settlement reached in September between Attorney General Jerry Brown and Shell Oil Products Co. LLC, Equillon Enterprises LLC, and TMR Co., formerly Texaco Refining & Marketing Inc.

"Shell Oil Co. disregarded the state's underground fuel storage and hazardous waste laws, committing hundreds of environmental violations at its gasoline stations across California," Brown said in a statement. "This judgment requires the company to pay \$19.5 million in penalties, comply with state law and improve its spill monitoring, employee training and hazardous waste management."

The attorney general's office launched an investigation three years ago of more than 1,000 Shell gasoline stations, after San Diego and Riverside County district attorneys settled cases with the company over alleged violations of underground fuel storage regulations, Brown said.

In the lawsuit, Brown accused the Shell gasoline stations of failing to maintain required health and safety permits at their California service stations, tampering with or disabling leak detection devices or alarms, failing to keep an up-to-date chemical inventory, failing to store incompatible hazardous materials separately, and not properly labeling hazardous waste containers, among other alleged violations of state regulations.

The regulations are intended to prevent spills of hazardous materials.

The judgment, by the state Superior Court in Alameda, adopts a settlement reached by Brown, Equillon, Shell and TMR Co.

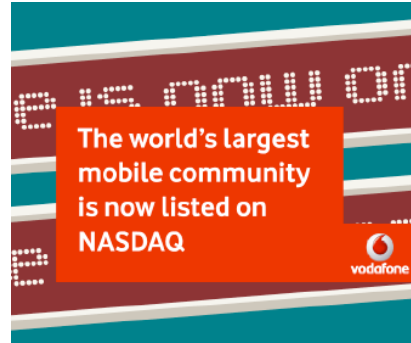
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