



December 20, 2017

ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN FILES LAWSUIT AGAINST LAKE COUNTY PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURER OVER WATER POLLUTION

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan, along with Lake County State’s Attorney Michael Nerheim, today announced a lawsuit against Baxter Healthcare Corporation (Baxter) for releasing wastewater containing contaminants that exceeded allowable limits into a tributary of Long Lake.

Madigan filed the complaint in Lake County Circuit Court against Baxter, which operates its research and development facility at 25212 W. Illinois Route 120 in Round Lake, Ill. Madigan is asking the court to require Baxter to immediately stop discharging contaminants that exceed its allowable limits into the tributary of Long Lake, and to pay a penalty for violating its National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit.

“This lawsuit requires Baxter to take immediate steps to prevent further polluting the lake and to pay penalties for its violations” Madigan said.

The Attorney General’s Office has been in contact with community groups that have raised concerns about Baxter’s onsite wastewater treatment system. Baxter manufactures healthcare products, and the company’s NPDES permit allows for treated water to be discharged into the lake. According to discharge monitoring reports Baxter submitted to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), the company violated its permit several times between January and May 2016 by discharging water that contained more than its allowable limit of total suspended solids and contaminants that deplete oxygen levels.

Inadequate oxygen levels in water can lead to rapid growth and decomposition of plants such as algae, which can have negative effects on the ecosystem of a body of water. Excessive levels of total suspended solids can also have negative effects on aquatic life.

Assistant Attorney General Molly Snittjer is handling the case for Madigan’s Environmental Bureau and Assistant State’s Attorney Lisle Stalter is handling the case for the Lake County State’s Attorney’s Office.

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