

ExxonMobil To Pay \$6.1 Million for Oil Spill

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On December 23, 2008, prosecutors in the U.S. District Court in Boston announced a wholly owned subsidiary of Exxon Mobil Corporation will pay \$6.1 million in fines and plead guilty to criminal charges of violating the Clean Water Act. The charges stemmed from a January 2006 spill of 15,000 gallons of diesel fuel at an Everett oil terminal. The spill occurred during a period of 12 hours when a metal coupling in the oil tanker M/V Nara burst due to pressure from a small diesel fuel leak. Diesel fuel spilled into the Island End and Mystic Rivers, coating both with a blue-green sheen. Coast Guard authorities discovered the source of the spill after receiving numerous concerned phone calls.

Investigations also revealed a contractor had discovered the faulty valve during a September 2005, but the company failed to take corrective action. While the fuel took several weeks to clean up and permeated some local boats and docks, there was no evident damage to wildlife in the area. ExxonMobil will pay \$538,652 in fines and cleanup costs as well as a community service payment of over \$5.6 million to the North American Wetlands Conservation Act Fund. Beyond the fine, the company will fund a court-appointed monitor to oversee the Everett terminal for three years and also follow a rigorous environmental compliance plan.

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