Environmental Criminal Enforcement/Clean Water Act: Navassa, North Carolina Chemical Processing Company Pleads Guilty to Alleged Violation

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The Eastern District of North Carolina United States Attorney's Office issued a December 15th news release stating that American Distillation, Inc. ("ADI") pleaded guilty to knowingly discharging tert-Butyl alcohol and other pollutants into the Cape Fear River in violation of the federal Clean Water Act.

ADI is described as chemical processing company located in Navassa, North Carolina.

The news release alleges that ADI dumped chemical-laden wastewater into North Carolina rivers and streams in violation of the Clean Water Act. It further states that:

… ADI's EPA-issued permit required ADI to properly dispose of TBOH byproduct, but beginning in late 2019 through 2024, ADI accepted more TBOH and other chemicals from its customers than it could legally and safely process and remove. From 2020 to 2024, five to six times per year, White released approximately 2,500 gallons of liquid wastewater from Tank 14 by connecting a hose that drained into a nearby pipe that drained directly to the Cape Fear River. ADI released TBOH byproduct from Tank 14 into the Cape Fear River to ensure maximum profits without ceasing operations. ADI management had informed some employees that if operations came to a halt, the company would suffer serious financial harm, potentially including dissolution.

A copy of the news release can be found here.