



**Walter Wright, Jr.**  
wwright@mwlaw.com  
(501) 688.8839

## Environmental Criminal Enforcement/Clean Water Act: Monroe, Wisconsin Cheese Manufacturer Sentenced for Alleged Violations

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The United States Attorney's Office for the Western District of Wisconsin issued an August 14th news release stating that Wisconsin Cheese Group, LLC ("WCG") was sentenced to one year of probation for allegedly violating the Clean Water Act.

The news release describes WCG as a cheese manufacturer headquartered in Monroe, Wisconsin.

The news release states that between June 6, 2022, and November 5, 2022, WCG disrupted the Village of Monticello's treatment works on 19 days due to releases of untreated wastewater from its cheese manufacturing plant into the municipal sewer. The company allegedly exceeded the biological oxygen demand limit in its own permit by high margins, including multiple discharges that exceeded the limit by more than 1500%. At the time of the discharges, there was stated to be an absence of specific controls to ensure compliance with its permit and the company did not adequately train employees on wastewater management.

The sentencing United States District Judge indicated that she found the offense serious because the violations were allegedly "entirely avoidable", stating:

- WCG should have implemented better planning as the company ramped up production.
- The company "overwhelmed" the local wastewater treatment plant and became a "neighborhood polluter."
- The company's "lackluster" response to its early violations allowed the conduct to continue for months.

The Judge did commend the company for cooperating with the government's investigation and committing to facility improvements, which will be enforced as conditions of probation.

The Judge sentenced WCG to one year of probation and assessed a penalty of \$275,500.

A copy of the news release can be found [here](#).