



**STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION
Division of Air Pollution Control
Davy Crockett Tower
500 James Robertson Parkway, 7th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243-1204**

Certified Article Number

9414 7266 9904 2251 4082 03

SENDER'S RECORD

Vonore Fiber Products LLC
c/o Julie Watson Anderson
167 Tellico Port Road
Vonore, Tennessee 37885-2435

RE: Vonore Fiber Products LLC
Facility Id. 62-0211
Case No. APC25-0243

Dear Ms. Anderson:

Enclosed, please find an Order and Assessment of Civil Penalty issued by Michelle Walker Owenby, Technical Secretary of the Air Pollution Control Board, Department of Environment and Conservation. Please read it carefully and pay special attention to the Notice of Rights section.

If you have any questions regarding this Order and Assessment of Civil Penalty, please contact Kevin McLain at air.pollution.control@tn.gov. For all other questions, please contact the Division of Air Pollution Control at (615) 532-0554 or air.pollution.control@tn.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Kevin M. McLain", is positioned above the printed name.

Kevin McLain
Section Manager, Enforcement
Division of Air Pollution Control

oou
Enclosure

**STATE OF TENNESSEE
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD**

IN THE MATTER OF:	)	DIVISION OF AIR POLLUTION CONTROL
	)	
	)	
VONORE FIBER PRODUCTS LLC,	)	
	)	
	)	
	)	
RESPONDENT.	)	CASE NO. APC25-0243

**TECHNICAL SECRETARY’S ORDER AND
ASSESSMENT OF CIVIL PENALTY**

Michelle Walker Owenby, Technical Secretary of the Air Pollution Control Board, states:

PARTIES

I.

Michelle Walker Owenby is the Technical Secretary of the Air Pollution Control Board (“Board”) and Director of the Division of Air Pollution Control (“Division”), Department of Environment and Conservation (“Department”).

II.

Vonore Fiber Products LLC (“Respondent”) is a domestic limited liability company authorized to do business in the State of Tennessee. The Respondent’s facility address is 200 Industrial Drive, Vonore, Tennessee. The Respondent’s registered agent for service of process is Julie Watson Anderson, 167 Tellico Port Road, Vonore, Tennessee 37885-2435.

AUTHORITY

III.

The Technical Secretary may assess a civil penalty of up to \$25,000 per day for each day of violation of the Tennessee Air Quality Act, Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 68-201-101 to -121 (“Act”), or Tennessee Air Pollution Control Regulations, Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 1200-03-01 to -36; 0400-30-01 to -39, (“Rules”). Tenn. Code Ann. § 68-201-116. The Technical Secretary may issue an order for correction to the responsible person when provisions of the Act or Rules are violated, and such person may be liable for resulting damages to the State. *Id.*

IV.

The Respondent is a “person,” Tenn. Code Ann. § 68-201-102(7), and has violated the Act and Rules.

V.

“Air contaminant” means particulate matter, dust, fumes, gas, mist, smoke, vapor, or any combinations thereof. Tenn. Code Ann. § 68-201-102(1).

VI.

“Air contaminant source” means any and all sources of emission of air contaminants, whether privately or publicly owned or operated. Tenn. Code Ann. § 68-201-102(2). The Respondent operates an air contaminant source.

FACTS

VII.

On May 15, 2018, the Technical Secretary issued Conditional Major construction permit 973491 (“Permit 973491”) (facility 62-0211) to the Respondent for the following sources:

Installation Description	Source #
Straw Processing Operation with Baghouse Control	01
Straw Pulping and Washing Operation with Thermal Oxidizer Control	02
Cleaned Pulp Processing	03
Co-Products Processing with Thermal Oxidizer Control	04
Natural Gas-Fired Boiler	05
Cooling Tower	06

The Technical Secretary amended Permit 973491 as follows:

Amendments	Issue Date
#1	July 23, 2020
#2	May 24, 2021
#3	November 10, 2021
#4	April 4, 2022
#5	April 2, 2023
#6	May 22, 2025

VIII.

Condition 20 of Permit 973491 states:

This permit shall serve as a temporary operating permit from the date of issuance to the receipt of a standard operating permit, provided that an operating permit application is filed in a timely manner as required by condition 19.

Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 1200-03-09-.02(2)

Operation of each air contaminant source shall be in accordance with the provisions and stipulations set forth in the operating (construction) permit, all provisions of the Tennessee Division of Air Pollution Control Comprehensive Rules and Regulations, and all provisions of the Tennessee Air Quality Act.

Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 1200-03-09-.02(6)

IX.

Condition 32 of Permit 973491 states, in pertinent part:

No later than October 31, 2025, the owner or operator shall conduct a performance test, and no later than December 31, 2025, the owner or operator shall furnish the Technical Secretary a written report of the results of the performance test results . .

* *

X.

On November 21, 2025, the Division was notified by the Respondent that the performance test required by Permit 973491 would be conducted on December 30, 2025. In a subsequent notification received by the Division on December 9, 2025, the Respondent indicated that the performance test was rescheduled for January 19, 2026, due to the facility being shut down for the holidays. Therefore, the Respondent violated Conditions 20 and 32 of Permit 973491. The results of the performance test are due by March 19, 2026. As of the date of this order, the Division has not received the results of the performance test. On August 26, 2026, the Division determined that a new construction permit with a revised performance test schedule would be issued, and the construction permit is currently in pending status..

XI.

On December 12, 2025, the Division issued a Notice of Violation to the Respondent for the violation discussed in Paragraph X.

VIOLATIONS

XII.

By failing to comply with Conditions 20 and 32 of Permit 973491, the Respondent violated Division Rule 1200-03-09-.01(1)(d), which states:

Construction of a new air contaminant source or the modification of an air contaminant source which may result in the discharge of air contaminants must be in accordance with the approved construction permit application or notice of intent; the provisions and stipulations set forth in the construction permit, notice of coverage, or notice of authorization; this Division 1200-03; Division 0400-30; any applicable measures of the control strategy; and Tennessee Air Quality Act.

ORDER AND ASSESSMENT OF CIVIL PENALTY

XIII.

1. The Respondent is assessed a civil penalty of \$3,000.00 for violation of the Act and Rules, to be paid to the Department at the following address:

**Treasurer, State of Tennessee
Division of Fiscal Services - Consolidated Fees Section
Department of Environment and Conservation
Davy Crockett Tower
500 James Robertson Parkway, 6th Floor
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-1204**

2. The civil penalty shall be delivered to the Department on or before the thirty-first day after receipt of this Order and Assessment of Civil Penalty. The case number, **APC25-0243**, should be clearly written on all correspondence.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

In issuing this Order and Assessment of Civil Penalty, the Department does not implicitly or expressly waive any provision of the Act or Rules promulgated thereunder or the authority to assess costs, civil penalties, and/or damages incurred by the State against the Respondent. The Department expressly reserves all rights it has at law and in equity to order further corrective action, assess civil penalties and/or damages, and to pursue further enforcement action including,

but not limited to, monetary and injunctive relief. Compliance with this order will be considered as a mitigating factor in determining the need for future enforcement action.

NOTICE OF RIGHTS

The Respondent may appeal this Order and Assessment. Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 68-201-108(a) and 68-201-116(b). To do so, a written petition setting forth the reasons for requesting a hearing must be received by the Technical Secretary within 30 days of the date the Respondent received this Order and Assessment, or this Order and Assessment becomes final. Any petition for review must be directed to **TDEC.Appeals@tn.gov**. The petition may also be mailed or delivered to Commissioner of the Department of Environment and Conservation, c/o Jenny L. Howard, General Counsel, Department of Environment and Conservation, Davy Crockett Tower, 500 James Robertson Pkwy, 5th Floor, Nashville, Tennessee 37243.

If an appeal is filed, an initial hearing of this matter will be conducted by an Administrative Judge as a contested case hearing. Tenn. Code Ann. § 68-201-108(a); Tenn. Code Ann. § 4-5-301 to -326; Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 1360-04-01. Such hearings are legal proceedings in the nature of a trial. Individual respondents may represent themselves or be represented by an attorney licensed to practice law in Tennessee. Artificial respondents (*e.g.*, corporations, limited partnerships, limited liability companies, etc.) cannot engage in the practice of law and therefore may only pursue an appeal through an attorney licensed to practice law in Tennessee. Low-income individuals may be eligible for representation at reduced or no cost through a local bar association or legal aid organization.

At the conclusion of any initial hearing, the Administrative Judge has the authority to affirm, modify, or deny this Order and Assessment of Civil Penalty, including the authority to increase or decrease the penalty. The Administrative Judge, on behalf of the Board, has the authority to assess additional damages incurred by the Department including, but not limited to, all docketing expenses associated with the setting of the matter for a hearing, and the hourly fees incurred due to the presence of the Administrative Judge and a court reporter.

Technical questions and other correspondence involving compliance issues should be sent to:

Kevin McLain, Division of Air Pollution Control
Department of Environment and Conservation
Davy Crockett Tower
500 James Robertson Pkwy, 7th Floor
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

Attorneys should contact the undersigned counsel of record. The case number, **APC25-0243**, should be written on all correspondence regarding this matter.

Issued by the Technical Secretary, Air Pollution Control Board, Department of Environment and Conservation, on Aug 28, 2026


Michelle Walker-Owenby (Aug 27, 2026 16:45:29 CDT)

Michelle Walker Owenby
Technical Secretary
Air Pollution Control Board

Reviewed by:



Grant LeMaster Ruhl
BPR # 036182
Associate Counsel
Department of Environment and Conservation
500 James Robertson Parkway, 5th Floor
Nashville, Tennessee 37243
(629) 201-0016
Grant.Ruhl@tn.gov