

RECORD
Searchlight
TUESDAY APRIL 8, 2008 REDDING, CALIFORNIA
47 CENTS

Toxic mill site draws fine

State seeks \$3 million from owners of former paper mill

By **Dylan Darling**
Record Searchlight

State water quality officials have issued a record \$3 million fine to the owners of the former Shasta Paper Company mill site in Anderson.

The fine followed Winemucca Trading Company's failure to

clean up the toxic sludge lingering in wastewater ponds, said Jim Pediti, assistant executive officer for the Central Valley Water Board.

"They basically didn't do what we asked," he said.

The fine is the largest ever issued by the Water Board's Redding office, he said.

The complaint, filed late last month, says Winemucca, which is based in Incline Village, Nev., failed to clean up accumulated contaminated wastes at the defunct Shasta Paper Mill. The mill last turned pulp to paper in 2001.

Earlier complaints had ordered the company to clean up

the site by Oct. 1, 2006.

"Every day you don't do something you get thousands of dollars of penalty," he said.

Jeff Scharf, a Sacramento attorney for Winemucca, did not return a pair of voice messages left Monday.

See **FINE**, A-3

Six injured in Palo Cedro wreck

Vehicles crash head-on, man arrested on suspicion of driving drunk



Rock Chalk

Mario Chalmers' clutch shooting the Kansas Jayhawks to its first national championship since 1950

Who's watching the watchers?

A grand jury investigation shows Orange County sheriff's deputy



contractors that could be used to perform system administration duties. But of those, 141 either had expired authorizations or had never been properly authorized.

There was particular concern that 27 of the 55 employees and contractors who apparently had not been authorized had accessed routers and switches to change security configurations.

In addition, system administrators circumvented authentication controls by setting up 34 unauthorized accounts that appeared to be shared-use accounts, the report found. During the fiscal 2007, some 4.4 million of the 5.2 million accesses to the control system were made by these 34 user accounts.

The IRS issued a statement Monday saying it had "taken a number of steps to improve the control and monitoring of routers and switches." The IRS emphasizes it is not aware that any taxpayer data has been compromised due to a security breach. We continue to work to improve our security capabilities of our technology assets, and we have extensive intrusion-monitoring capabilities to watch for potential breaches.

The inspector general's office faulted the IRS for not adequately reviewing the "audit trail" logs that could help identify questionable activity.

The IRS, in response, agreed to most of the report's recommendations for tightening controls. It said it would lock employee use accounts after 45 days of inactivity and remove those ac-

paramedics tending to the patients was cut and was also taken to Mercy, said Redding Police Department traffic specialist Michael DiMatteo.

Christopher Gelms, 24, of Redding was driving west on

FINE

CONTINUED FROM A-1

For more than 20 years, Simpson Paper Company ran the mill before selling it to Shasta Paper Company in the late 1990s, Pedri said.

After the sale the water board issued an order to Shasta Paper to clean up hazardous wastes — thousands of gallons of dioxin-tainted sludge at the mill.

Shasta Paper went bankrupt in 2001 and closed the mill, putting 400 employees out of work.

Winemucca bought the mill and adjoining industrial wastewater lagoons at a May 2004 public auction. In October that year the water board issued an order for

air operations paramedic, DiMatteo said.

Rhyme said the teens in the first wreck were traveling west on Highway 44 in a white Ford Taurus when a green Ford pickup drifted into their lane just west of

More online

To see a copy of the complaint against Winemucca, go to Redding.com

the company to create a plan to clean up the site and have the work done in two years.

"It's just sitting there, but it's got to go," Pedri said.

Although he doesn't think dioxin is getting into ground water, studies are needed to determine the extent of the contamination, he said.

Pedri said the board is concerned that Winemucca isn't planning to clean up the site, but has plans to di-

vide it and sell off the unpolluted parcels, leaving the polluted land for the state to deal with. Cost of cleaning up the dioxin, a known carcinogen in even trace amounts, was tagged at \$2.8 million a couple of years ago.

The \$3 million fine should cover the cost of a state cleanup if Winemucca doesn't do it, Pedri said. One of the hundreds who lost jobs seven years ago, Sam Plearcy, who was president of the Papermakers Union Local 1101, said he'd figured that such a fine was in the making.

Since the mill shut down he said he hasn't seen much activity there.

operational performance and quality declined once again to the lowest level that it's ever been."

The annual Airline Quality Rating survey found that more bags were lost, more passengers were bumped, more consumers complained and fewer flights arrived on-time than in the previous year. The overall "quality score" the researchers gave the industry (-2.16) was the

lowest ever for the U.S. airlines," said Brent Bowen, a study co-author and professor at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. "Overall

the poor ratings come at a time of rising fuel prices and

WASHINGTON — Low-cost carriers AirTran, Jet Blue and Southwest took the top three spots in a national survey of airline quality, while the industry overall hit its lowest rating in the nearly two decades of the study.

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to the hospitals by ambulance lances.

Reporter David Benda can be reached at 225-8219 or at dbenda@redning.com.

Reporter Constance Dillon can be reached at 225-8372 or at cdillon@redning.com.

Reporter Dylan Darling can be reached at 225-8266 or at ddarling@redning.com.

Fix the bottom of the market so the market can turn around."

The Bush administration opposes the foreclosure chase tax credit, though it has been circumspect in its public statements. In an unusual step, the White House did not issue an official policy statement as it does with most important legislation.

"Some of the proposals we've seen might have potential to distort the market," said Treasury Department spokesman Andrew DeSouza.

AirTran, Jet Blue rank well in quality

By Jennifer C. Kerr
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Low-cost carriers AirTran, Jet Blue and Southwest took the top three spots in a national survey of airline quality, while the industry overall hit its lowest rating in the nearly two decades of the study.

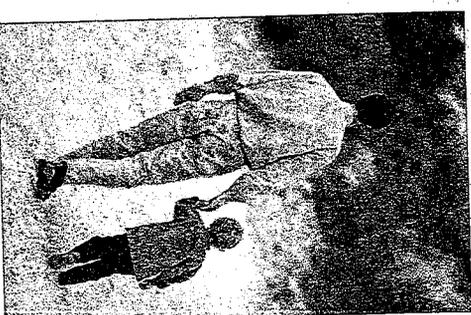
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