

## Court Bulletin

# Pest Control Company and Employee fined \$132,400 for Pesticide Discharge Causing Adverse Affect at Ottawa School

October 13, 2017 12:00 P.M. | [Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change](#)

**Convicted** - Rentokil Pest Control Canada Limited (Rentokil) and Luc Lortie

**Location** - Ottawa

**Description of Offence** - The conviction relates to causing or permitting the discharge of a pesticide into a public school that caused impairment to the environment, material discomfort and adversely affected the health of staff and students, and applying the pesticide not in accordance with the label.

**Date of Offence** - On or about April 11, 2015

**Date of Conviction** - On October 12, 2017

**Penalty Imposed** - Rentokil Pest Control Canada Limited (Rentokil) pleaded guilty and was convicted on one count under the Pesticides Act (PA), was fined \$130,000 plus a victim fine surcharge (VFS) of \$32,500 with 60 days to pay. Mr. Luc Lortie pleaded guilty and was convicted of one offence under the PA, was fined \$2,400 plus a VFS of \$600 with 60 days to pay.

### Background -

- Rentokil Pest Control Canada Limited (Rentokil) is a company that provides pest control services, and is approved to operate commercially in the pesticide industry.
- At the time of the incident, Luc Lortie was employed by Rentokil and held a valid pest control licence.
- The Ottawa Carleton District School Board (the school board) owns and operates Charles H. Hulse Public School (the public school) in Ottawa; at the time of the event, approximately 340 students attended the school and there was a daycare on-site.
- Between 2013 and 2015, the school was experiencing pest control problems and Rentokil was hired to apply pesticides several times, using a variety of products.
- In the spring of 2015, Mr. Lortie decided to use Air Guard Konk 400 Residual Insecticide Spray with Baygon; this was in addition to applying Gardex 1% Baygon Residual Insecticide (which had been earlier recommended for a Christmas break application, when students would be offsite). On Saturday, April 11, 2015, Mr. Lortie applied these two pesticides.
- On April 13-14, 2015, staff and students noticed a strong odour and reported itching, watery/itchy eyes, sore throats, dizziness and headaches. Ottawa Public Health was notified and they contacted the ministry.
- On April 15, 2015, the odours persisted. Some students were moved to different areas within the school, and the school opened the windows to enhance ventilation. The school board staff scrubbed and cleaned the areas where the pesticides had been sprayed. Despite these actions, staff and students

continued to report symptoms and the school was therefore closed on April 17, 2015 and remained closed until May 25, 2015.

- The matter was referred to the ministry's Investigations and Enforcement Branch. Following an investigation Rentokil Pest Control Canada Limited and Mr. Luc Lortie were charged.
- On October 12, 2017 Rentokil Pest Control Canada Limited was convicted and fined \$130,000 plus a victim fine surcharge of \$32,500. Mr. Lortie was also convicted and fined a total of \$2,400 plus a victim fine surcharge of \$600.

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## Media Contacts

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