

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

IN THE MATTER OF: \_\_\_\_\_ )

Blake Broome )  
Leesburg, Cherokee County, Alabama )

PROPOSED  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
ORDER NO: 22-XXX-AP

FINDINGS

Pursuant to the provisions of the Alabama Environmental Management Act, Ala. Code §§ 22-22A-1 to 22- 22A-17, *as amended*, the Alabama Air Pollution Control Act, Ala. Code §§ 22-28-1 to 22-28-23, *as amended*, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (“Department” or “ADEM”) Administrative Code of Regulations (“ADEM Admin. Code R.”) promulgated pursuant thereto, and the federal Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. 7401 to 7671q, *as amended*, the Department makes the following FINDINGS:

1. Blake Broome (“Broome”) owns/operates an unincorporated landscaping business in Leesburg, Cherokee County, Alabama.
2. The Department is a duly constituted department of the State of Alabama pursuant to Ala. Code §§ 22-22A-1 to 22-22A-17, *as amended*.
3. Pursuant to Ala. Code § 22-22A-4(n), *as amended*, the Department is the state air pollution control agency for the purposes of the federal Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. 7401 to 7671q, *as amended*. In addition, the Department is authorized to administer and enforce the provisions of the Alabama Air Pollution Control Act, Ala. Code §§ 22-28-1 to 22-28-23, *as amended*.

4. ADEM Admin. Code r. 335-3-3-.01(2)(b)1 states that "...open burning must take place on the property on which the combustible fuel originates."

5. ADEM Admin. Code r. 335-3-3-.01(2)(b)2 states that "the location of the burning must be at least 500 feet from the nearest occupied dwelling other than a dwelling located on the property which the burning is conducted."

6. ADEM Admin. Code r. 335-3-3-.01(2)(b)4 states that "Only vegetation and untreated wood may be burned. It is unauthorized to open burn heavy oils, asphalt products, plastics, vinyl materials, insulation, paper, cardboard, natural or synthetic rubber, salvage or scrap materials, chemicals, garbage, treated or painted wood, or any trash."

7. In September 2021, the Department received four complaints regarding unauthorized open burning being conducted by Broome on property located at 1695 County Road 44 in Leesburg, Cherokee County, Alabama (the "Site").

8. On September 22, 2021, the Department conducted an inspection of the Site and observed several burn piles. A Warning Notice was left on Site.

9. On February 1, 2022, the Department received a complaint regarding unauthorized open burning of imported vegetation and refuse being conducted at the Site.

10. On March 29, 2022, the Department received an additional complaint regarding continued unauthorized open burning of imported vegetation and refuse being conducted at the Site.

11. On March 30 2022, the Department conducted an inspection of the Site and observed a burn pile containing vegetation, construction/demolition waste, and various refuse. A second burn pile containing vegetation only was observed. The burning was conducted within 500 feet of the nearest occupied dwelling not at the Site.

12. Pursuant to Ala. Code § 22-22A-5(18)c., *as amended*, in determining the amount of any penalty, the Department must give consideration to the seriousness of the violations, including any irreparable harm to the environment and any threat to the health or safety of the public; the standard of care manifested by such person; the economic benefit which delayed compliance may confer upon such person; the nature, extent and degree of success of such person's efforts to minimize or mitigate the effects of such violations upon the environment; such person's history of previous violations; and the ability of such person to pay such penalty. Any civil penalty assessed pursuant to this authority shall not exceed \$25,000.00 for each violation, provided however, that the total penalty assessed in an order issued by the Department shall not exceed \$250,000.00. Each day such violation continues shall constitute a separate violation. In arriving at this civil penalty, the Department has considered the following:

A. SERIOUSNESS OF THE VIOLATION: Broome conducted unauthorized open burning of vegetation and various regulated materials. The Department considers these violations to be serious.

B. THE STANDARD OF CARE: There appeared to be no care taken by Broome to comply with the applicable requirements of the ADEM Admin. Code rs. 335-3-3-.01(2)(b)1, 335-3-3-.01(2)(b)2, and 335-3-3-.01(2)(b)4.

C. ECONOMIC BENEFIT WHICH DELAYED COMPLIANCE MAY HAVE CONFERRED: Broome likely derived an economic benefit by not legally disposing of the materials.

D. EFFORTS TO MINIMIZE OR MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF THE VIOLATION UPON THE ENVIRONMENT: There were no efforts by Broome to

mitigate possible effects of these violations upon the environment at the time the violations occurred.

E. HISTORY OF PREVIOUS VIOLATIONS: Broome has no previous history with the Department for violating the Open Burning regulations.

F. THE ABILITY TO PAY: Broome has not alleged an inability to pay the civil penalty.

G. OTHER FACTORS: The Department has carefully considered the six statutory penalty factors enumerated in Ala. Code § 22-22A-5(18)c., *as amended*, as well as the need for timely and effective enforcement, and has concluded that a civil penalty herein is appropriate (*See* "Attachment A", which is hereby incorporated into these Findings).

#### ORDER

Based upon the foregoing FINDINGS and pursuant to Ala. Code §§22-22A-5(10), 22-22A-5(12), 22-22-5(18), and 22-28-18, *as amended*, it is hereby ORDERED:

A. That, not later than forty-five days after the issuance of this Order, Broome shall pay to the Department a civil penalty in the amount of \$5,000.00 for the violations cited herein. Said penalty shall be made payable to the Alabama Department of Environment Management by certified or cashier's check and shall be submitted to:

Office of General Counsel  
Alabama Department of  
Environmental Management  
P.O. Box 301463  
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-1463

B. That, immediately upon receipt of this Order and continuing thereafter, Broome shall ensure immediate and future compliance with ADEM Admin. Code r. 335-3-3-.01.

C. That, should any provision of this Order be declared by a court of competent jurisdiction or the Environmental Management Commission to be inconsistent with Federal or State law and therefore unenforceable, the remaining provisions hereof shall remain in full force and effect.

D. Except as otherwise set forth herein, this Order is not and shall not be interpreted to be a permit or modification of an existing permit under federal, State or local law, and shall not be construed to waive or relieve Broome of their obligations to comply in the future with any permit or other written direction from the Department.

E. That, issuance of this Administrative Order does not preclude the Department from seeking criminal fines or other appropriate sanctions or relief against Broome for the violations cited herein.

F. That, failure to comply with the provisions of this Administrative Order shall constitute cause for commencement of legal action by the Department against Broome for recovery of additional civil penalties, criminal fines, or other appropriate sanctions or relief.

ORDERED and ISSUED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2022.

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Lance R. LeFleur, Director  
Alabama Department of Environmental  
Management  
1400 Coliseum Boulevard  
Montgomery, Alabama 36110-2059  
(334) 271-7700

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Ronald W. Gore, do hereby certify that I have served this Proposed Administrative Order upon the person(s) listed below by sending the same, postage paid, through the United States Mail **9489 0090 0027 6294 9245 23** with instructions to forward and return receipt, to:

Blake Broome  
1695 County Road 44  
Leesburg, AL 35983

DONE this the 13<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2022.

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Ronald W. Gore  
Chief - Air Division  
Alabama Department of  
Environmental Management

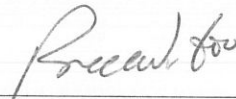


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Ronald W. Gore  
Chief - Air Division  
Alabama Department of  
Environmental Management



## ATTACHMENT A

Blake Broome  
Leesburg, Cherokee County, AL

Violation*	Number of Violations*	Seriousness of Violation*	Standard of Care*	History of Previous Violations*	
Unauthorized open burning	2	\$2,500	\$1,500	\$0	
					<b>Total of Three Factors</b>
<b>TOTAL PER FACTOR</b>		<b>\$2,500</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$4,000</b>

Adjustments to Amount of Initial Penalty	
Mitigating Factors (-)	-\$2,000
Ability to Pay (-)	
Other Factors (+/-)	
Total Adjustments (+/-) <i>Enter at Right</i>	-\$2,000

Economic Benefit (+)	\$1,000
Amount of Initial Penalty	\$5,000
Total Adjustments (+/-)	-\$2,000
<b>FINAL PENALTY</b>	<b>\$3,000.00</b>

### Footnotes

\* See the "Department's Findings" portion of the Order for a detailed description of each violation and the penalty factors.