The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services

Michael P. Nolin
Commissioner

LETTER OF DEFICIENCY
WD WWEB/C 05-01
December 27, 2005
Revised

Mr. Brian Caisse
Atlantic Paper Mills of New Hampshire, LLC
P.O. Box 126
Ashuelot, New Hampshire 03441

Subject: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Reconnaissance Inspections at Atlantic Paper Mills of New Hampshire, LLC, Winchester, NH - NPDES Permit # NH0001180

Dear Mr. Caisse:

In response to a complaint on August 22, 2005 of an offensive odor emanating from Atlantic Paper Mills' wastewater lagoons, the Department of Environmental Services (DES) Wastewater Engineering Bureau, conducted several inspections of Atlantic Paper's wastewater treatment facility.

The following people were present during these inspections (Name, Title, Organization, Inspection Date(s) present):

Brian Caisse, Mill Manager, Atlantic Paper, 8/29/05, 9/16/05, 11/22/05
William Jocelyn, Mill Worker, Atlantic Paper, 8/29/05, 12/8/05
Roy D. Gilbreth, Environmental Inspector, DES, 8/29/05, 11/22/05
Thomas J. Croteau, Environmental Inspector, DES, 12/8/05
Tom White, Environmental Inspector, DES, 9/16/05
Margaret Bastien, Compliance Engineer, 8/29/05
Michael Rainey, Hydrogeologist III, DES, 11/22/05, 12/8/05

Enclosed is a copy of EPA Form 3560 – Water Compliance Inspection Report and the analytical results for effluent samples taken at Atlantic Paper during the November 22, 2005 inspection. Results from testing of sludge samples collected on December 8, 2005 will be sent in separate correspondence.

Based on the inspections, six deficiencies were noted and are summarized below:

1. Lagoon odors were noted during the August 29, 2005, September 16, 2005 and November 22, 2005 inspections. Even though chemical treatment was

applied the odors are still present. The lagoons must be treated to control odors.

2. During the November 22, 2005 inspection, approximately 200 to 300 gpd of lagoon effluent passed through the parshall flume in the flow building. However, no effluent sampling and flow monitoring was performed by Atlantic Paper. Mr. Caisse said since the effluent pipe flow valve is shut, Atlantic Paper personnel have not been checking the outfall flume daily to determine if there is a discharge. Pursuant to Part I, Section A of your NPDES permit, any discharge must be measured for flow and pH continuously, and 24-hour composite BOD and TSS samples must be taken daily. To ensure there is no discharge, the outfall flume must be checked daily.

3. The November 22, 2005 inspection revealed Atlantic Paper was discharging to the Ashuelot River. However Atlantic Paper certified in its November 2005 Discharge Monitoring Report that there was no discharge from outfall #001A during this time. A corrected DMR, that reflects the fact that Atlantic Paper did discharge to the Ashuelot River during November 2005, must be forwarded to DES and EPA.

4. High flow in Ashuelot River during October and November damaged the Outfall 001A discharge pipe, causing effluent to discharge onto the shore of the river rather than into the river. The outfall pipe must be repaired.

5. During the December 8, 2005 inspection, an estimate of 1-2 gallon per minute of flow was entering the effluent flume from a cracked pipe connected to the filter press wash pump located in the flume building. The flow was sheeting across the flume building concrete floor and entering the upstream end of the flume, making it impossible to determine whether there was any discharge flow from the lagoons. Atlantic Paper must determine the source of this water and eliminate this untreated discharge to the Ashuelot River. If, after eliminating this discharge, lagoon effluent is discharging to the Ashuelot River, APM must monitor the effluent for flow, pH, BOD, and TSS in accordance with Part I, Section A of its NPDES permit.

In addition to the above noted deficiencies, the following observations and/or recommendations are noted:

1. Based on the December 8, 2005 inspection, both the primary and polishing lagoons have only four inches of freeboard. This condition of freeboard being less than 1 foot was also noted during August 29, 2005 and November 22, 2005 inspections. DES recommended during the August inspection that the freeboard depth be increased. Atlantic Paper must increase the freeboard depth to avoid effluent from either overflowing the lagoon embankment or structurally damaging lagoon embankments due to water level being deeper than the embankment was designed for. During any discharge, the effluent must be monitored in accordance with Part I, Section A of Atlantic Paper's

NPDES permit. Also, the Dam Bureau has been notified of the freeboard being less than what the embankments were designed for.

2. Some paper sludge has traveled down slope from the typical footprint for paper sludge storage. All sludge should be moved off-site and disposed of in accordance with local, state and federal requirements.

3. During the November 22, 2005 inspection, it was noted that the lagoon aerators had been removed. Lack of aeration is interfering with proper operation of the facility and may result in discharge permit violations.

4. During the December 8, 2005 inspection it was noted that the clarifier surface, launder and outlet pipe were frozen. This will most likely make discharging water from the paper mill to the primary clarifier difficult, if not impossible.

5. The brush burn pile contained some painted wood. Painted wood cannot be burned. The painted wood should be disposed of in accordance with local, state and federal regulations.

DES requests that Atlantic Paper respond by **January 31, 2006** with a description of all actions taken to correct the deficiencies identified during these inspections. This description should also include the dates the deficiencies were corrected or the anticipated correction date. When the response is complete, the responsible official for Atlantic Paper must sign the response. DES requests all correction actions are completed by and notification of all correction actions is received by **March 31, 2006**. Please send the written response to DES/WD-WWEB, Attention: Roy Gilbreth, P.O. Box 95, Concord, NH 03302-0095.

If DES does not receive a complete response signed by the appropriate official within the allowed time frame, further State and/or Federal action may be initiated. Further actions may include issuing an order, initiating an administrative fine proceeding and/or seeking civil or criminal penalties.

Sincerely,

COPY

John R. Bush, P.E.
Administrator
Wastewater Engineering Bureau

cc: DES, WD, WWEB/File
Roy Gilbreth, Inspector, WWEB
Steve Doyon, Inspector, Dam Bureau
Kerry Bamsley, Esq., Legal Unit
Joy Hilton, USEPA Water Technical Unit
Shaun Gabbay, Vice President, Atlantic Paper Mills, LLC

Attachments: EPA Form 3560 – Water Compliance Inspection Report
November 22, 2005 sample results

CERTIFIED MAIL/RRR: 7099 3400 0003 6154 2836