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PRESS RELEASE

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Attorney General Brown Announces Convictions of Two Men for Charges Related to the Illegal Discharge of Pollutants in Montgomery County *Defendants Ordered to Pay Fines to Maryland Clean Water Fund*

BALTIMORE, MD (February 6, 2025) - Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today announced the convictions in the Circuit Court for Montgomery County for Robert H. Dupey, 51, of Randallstown, and Jaime A. Beza, 33, of Berwyn Heights, for violations of Maryland environmental laws regarding the discharge of pollutants in Montgomery County.

The investigation was led by the Attorney General's Environmental and Natural Resources Crimes Unit (ENRCU) and the Montgomery County Department of the Environment.

The investigation revealed that on April 18, 2024, Dupey and Beza, who were both employees of JPG Plumbing and Mechanical, Inc., a plumbing, HVAC, and industrial vacuum services company, were scheduled to vacuum out water and sludge at a location in Montgomery County. Beza and Dupey picked up Truck #85 from JPG's business lot in Laurel but discovered that the tank was too full of grease and other pollutants to complete the job. In order to quickly empty the tank, rather than making the approximately two-hour round-trip drive to properly dispose of the waste at the Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Facility in Washington, D.C., they instead agreed to simply empty Truck #85 by illegally dumping its contents.

"Illegally dumping toxic waste into our waterways is not just reckless—it's an outright betrayal of the responsibility businesses and their employees have to our communities," **said Attorney General Brown**. "This kind of lawlessness endangers public health, harms our environment, and will not be tolerated. We will continue to aggressively prosecute those who put their convenience over the safety of Marylanders and our natural resources."

To illegally empty the truck, the defendants drove to the Ashton Village Center, located on Olney Sandy Spring Road in Ashton, Montgomery County, Maryland, and parked behind a 7-Eleven convenience store. There, they worked together to empty the truck's contents into a manhole in the alleyway behind the 7-Eleven. Surveillance video from the Ashton Village Center

captured the vacuum hose being removed from the truck by Dupey and the manhole being opened by Beza.

The manhole where the defendants illegally dumped the waste drains directly into Ashton Pond, which is part of a residential community. The waste deposited by the defendants polluted the pond, filling the pond and its drainage pipes with grease.



A concerned citizen reported the incident to the authorities, who responded and placed absorbent booms to absorb the discharge. JPG Plumbing and Mechanical ultimately agreed to clean the site with costs of the cleanup exceeding \$69,000.

On December 30, 2024, Beza pleaded guilty to discharge of a pollutant before the Honorable Ann Harrington of the Circuit Court for Montgomery County. Beza was sentenced to 364 days in jail, all suspended, with supervised probation and a \$2,000 fine payable to the Maryland Clean Water Fund.

On January 29, 2025, Dupey pleaded guilty to discharge of a pollutant before the Honorable Eric Johnson of the Circuit Court for Montgomery County. Dupey was sentenced to probation and a \$1,000 fine payable to the Maryland Clean Water Fund.

Attorney General Brown thanked his Criminal Division, specifically Environmental and Natural Resources Crimes Unit Chief D'Arcy Talley, Chief Investigator Thomas Waugh, and Assistant Attorney General Eileen Murphy, who prosecuted these cases. Attorney General Brown also thanked State's Attorney for Montgomery County John McCarthy for his assistance in this prosecution, as well as the Montgomery County Department of the Environmental Protection for their response to the discharge and cooperation in this prosecution.

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