



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
**Board of Registration of
Hazardous Waste Site Cleanup Professionals**

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STATE BOARD SUSPENDS LICENSE OF HAZARDOUS WASTE SITE CLEANUP PROFESSIONAL

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Board of Registration of Hazardous Waste Site Cleanup Professionals has suspended the license of James J. Decoulos, of Decoulos & Company in Cambridge, for one year commencing on February 21, 2025. Mr. Decoulos is licensed as a Hazardous Waste Site Cleanup Professional (Licensed Site Professional, or LSP). The suspension follows an unsuccessful appeal by Mr. Decoulos of a Board decision.

The disciplinary charges against Mr. Decoulos stemmed from his work as an LSP on two contaminated sites located in Carver and Randolph. The charges were initiated by a complaint from a private citizen. The Board's investigation concluded that Mr. Decoulos' reports for these sites failed to meet MassDEP's requirements and the professional standards of LSPs.

At the Carver site, a gas station on Main Street, diesel fuel contamination had been detected in groundwater. In reports to MassDEP, Mr. Decoulos failed to adequately assess the connection between the diesel fuel release and contamination detected in a stormwater outfall nearby. MassDEP determined that his conclusions were flawed, requiring additional assessment and cleanup work. The Board agreed with Massachusetts DEP's assessment that Mr. Decoulos' reports did not meet state standards.

At the Randolph site, a gas station on North Main Street, gasoline contamination had been detected in soil and groundwater. In a report, Mr. Decoulos asserted that no significant risk remained on the property. However, MassDEP's review found that he had not adequately evaluated either the potential for contamination to affect indoor air in buildings on the property or the extent of contamination in groundwater. Additional assessment was required, and the Board again concurred with MassDEP's findings that Mr. Decoulos' reports failed to meet regulatory requirements.

The Board reached a final decision to discipline Mr. Decoulos after affording Mr. Decoulos an adjudicatory hearing. Mr. Decoulos then appealed the Board's final decision to Superior Court and then the Appeals Court. Both the Superior and Appeals Courts upheld the Board's decision.

Diane Baxter, Chair of the Board, stated: “In this case, the LSP failed to meet one of the Board’s overarching disciplinary rules. This rule requires all LSPs, when they provide professional services, to act with reasonable care and diligence. By suspending Mr. Decoulos’ license for one year, the Board is acting to both protect the public and to uphold the Board’s professional conduct standards.”

LSPs are licensed by this state board to oversee the assessment and cleanup of property in Massachusetts that has become contaminated with oil, gasoline, or other hazardous materials. Chapter 21E of the General Laws requires that property owners and others who are legally responsible for such contamination must retain the services of an LSP to oversee work done to assess the nature and extent of the contamination and the risks it poses. If the site is found to pose a significant risk, an LSP must also oversee the cleanup required. In the course of assessing and cleaning up the contamination, LSPs and their clients must submit written reports to MassDEP demonstrating that MassDEP’s Chapter 21E regulations have been followed. These regulations are designed to protect public health and the environment from any significant risks posed by the contamination.

The Massachusetts Board of Registration of Hazardous Waste Site Cleanup Professionals works to maintain high standards of practice by LSPs. It protects public health, welfare, and the environment by establishing qualifications for licensure, administering a licensing exam, requiring that LSPs obtain continuing education, and investigating complaints against LSPs to ensure compliance with state laws, regulations, and the Board’s own rules of professional conduct. Any member of the public may file a complaint with the Board alleging that an LSP did not meet the state regulations or professional standards in conducting assessment and/or cleanup activities at a contaminated site.

For more information about the Board, a directory of licensed LSPs and details about Massachusetts’ Hazardous Waste Site Cleanup program, visit <http://www.mass.gov/lsp> or contact the Board directly.

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