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****PRESS RELEASE****

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2011

**CITY ATTORNEY FILES CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST
PIPELINE COMPANY OVER WILMINGTON OIL SPILL**

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles City Attorney’s Environmental Justice Unit filed a multiple count criminal complaint against a pipeline company following a massive oil spill in Wilmington. Deputy City Attorneys Nick Karno and Jessica Brown are prosecuting the case.

The 61-count complaint against CRIMSON PIPELINE MANAGEMENT, INC., and others alleges that the company and its operators unlawfully caused, allowed, permitted, and contributed to the discharge of large quantities of oil into the City’s storm drain system, which led into the waters of the Dominguez Channel and the Port of Los Angeles. The complaint also alleges that the Defendants failed to report the spill to the proper agencies in a timely manner.

Law enforcement became aware of a pipeline breach on December 21, 2010, when significant amounts of oil seeped into the Dominguez Channel during a large storm event. Investigators gathered samples of the oil for evidence and were able to identify a hydrocarbon “fingerprint.” The fingerprinting analysis revealed that the material that entered Dominguez Channel was consistent with the product shipped by Crimson Pipeline.

The California Department of Fish and Game (“F&G”) and the Los Angeles Watershed Protection Division (“WPD”) have been involved in the investigation and discovered a gash in the pipeline casing, which is the protective piping that surrounds the oil pipeline. The gash was wrapped, and the carrier pipe inside the casing was ultimately pulled out of the ground in October, 2011. To date, F&G and WPD have recovered over 1,000 gallons of pure crude oil and over 290,000 gallons of contaminated wastewater. The United States Environmental Protection Agency installed a retention system designed to capture any oil that reaches the storm drain system during future rain events.

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