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From: Seneca, Roy
Sent: Fri 7/19/2013 12:30:09 PM
Subject: Dow Jones Business News (7-19) Exxon Unit to Pay Clean Water Act Penalty

Exxon Unit to Pay Clean Water Act Penalty Exxon Mobil Corp. (XOM) has agreed to pay a $100,000 penalty and take steps to prevent spills of wastewater from drilling operations, settling allegations it violated the Clean Water Act, the U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said. The settlement requires Exxon's natural-gas subsidiary, XTO Energy Inc., to beef up safeguards for storing wastewater left over from hydraulic fracturing, which involves injecting water, sand and chemicals into a well to break up rock and release oil and gas. The agencies estimated the improvements would cost $20 million and will include more barriers to guard against spills as well as remote monitoring of tanks that hold wastewater. The settlement stems from a 2010 spill at a XTO facility in north-central Pennsylvania, where state regulators found wastewater had seeped into a tributary of the Susquehanna River. The settlement "establishes a program of best practices that should be a model for the industry and, if followed, will give a level of assurance to the people of the Commonwealth that their waters will be protected," Peter J. Smith, U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, said in a statement. Exxon said that "XTO worked quickly and cooperatively with state and federal authorities to clean up this discharge of produced water, which resulted in no lasting environmental impact." It added in its statement that the "consent decree is an appropriate resolution of this matter." Exxon added that XTO has largely implemented the containment strategy in the region over the last 18 months. The Justice Department, in its statement, said the settlement means XTO will increase wastewater recycling and will properly dispose of wastewater generated by its natural gas activities across the mid-Atlantic region. Exxon shares rose 92 cents to close Thursday at $94.38.

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