

ExxonMobil Sued over Deceitful Cover-Up of the Dangers of Climate Change

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The Conservation Law Foundation has just filed the first lawsuit against ExxonMobil for violations under the Clean Water Act and other laws, committed in its deliberate, reckless and deceitful cover-up of its true knowledge of the dangers of climate change.

Communities were put in danger and remain in danger, all to cut costs for one of the most profitable corporations in the world. It's time to make Exxon answer for decades of false statements to the public and to regulators.

The Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) filed a lawsuit today against ExxonMobil for its endangerment of communities along the Mystic River.

It's the first lawsuit of its kind in the nation since revelations last year about the corporation's decades-long campaign to discredit climate science.

Today's filing comes several months after CLF submitted a formal letter of intent to sue ExxonMobil, [a development that was announced at a press conference in May](#).

The suit focuses on Exxon's violations of both the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), laws designed to protect the health and safety of waterfront communities in the face of climate change.

Exxon 'put communities in danger' for profit

"For more than three decades, ExxonMobil has devoted its resources to deceiving the public about climate science while using its knowledge about climate change to advance its business operations", said CLF president Bradley Campbell.

Communities were put in danger and remain in danger, all to cut costs for one of the most profitable corporations in the world. It's time to make Exxon answer for decades of false statements to the public and to regulators and ensure that its Everett facility meets its legal obligation to protect thousands of people and the Boston Harbor estuary from toxic water pollution.

CLF's trial team for the case will include nationally renowned attorney Allan Kanner of the Louisiana-based Kanner & Whitely, whose firm has represented states and other plaintiffs in landmark cases against major oil companies, including claims arising from BP's Deepwater Horizon spill.

Damali Vidot, Chelsea City Councilor-At-Large, commented: “As a mom and a representative of my community, I feel I have a responsibility to protect my kids and those I serve against the impacts of pollution in our water. I’m standing with CLF today because I believe Exxon must be held accountable for its actions.”

More actions certain to follow

In March of this year, Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey joined a coalition of 17 attorneys general seeking to hold fossil fuel companies accountable for campaigns to deceive customers, shareholders, and the public about climate risk.

While CLF is the first organization officially to begin a civil lawsuit against ExxonMobil for this deceit, many other legal actions are likely to follow – and not just against ExxonMobil, says Gillian Lobo, a lawyer with London-based legal charity ClientEarth working on energy and climate issues:

The impacts of climate change, particularly from storm surges, are increasingly clear. Companies with high-risk operations must make sure their safety planning is robust and follows the latest science on climate impacts.

Reducing risks to human health, local communities and the environment is the only way to avoid legal action, and protect people and the planet.

Oliver Tickell is contributing editor at *The Ecologist*.

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