



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Department of Environmental Quality

Eastern Region Bend Office
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Bend, OR 97701
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July 1, 2025

Ryan Escobar, EHS Manager
Kronospan La Grande, LLC
62621 Oregon Hwy 82
La Grande, OR 97850

RE: Warning Letter
Kronospan La Grande, LLC Particleboard Plant
2025-WL-9917
Permit No. 103044
Union County

Dear Mr. Escobar:

Kronospan La Grande, LLC (Kronospan) is authorized to collect, store, and treat stormwater and industrial wastewater effluent for the particleboard plant located in 62621 Oregon Hwy 82, La Grande, Oregon under a Water Pollution Control Facilities (WPCF) permit No. 103044. On June 19, 2025, Kronospan notified DEQ of noncompliance at the facility (Attachment 1). Schedule A.4, Table A1 of the WPCF permit provides effluent limits for pH at the Cooling Pond:

Table A1: Pond Effluent Limits

Parameter	Limitation
pH (Cooling Pond only)	Must be within the range of 6.5 to 8.5 SU for effluent discharged into the pond

According to the noncompliance report, the facility has documented the following exceedances of the upper pH limit at the Cooling Pond:

Date	Result	Excursion
June 16, 2025	8.56	0.06
June 18, 2025	8.74	0.24

Kronospan responded immediately to the pH exceedances by pumping fresh water to the Cooling Pond but was limited by capacity. Further corrective actions described include:

- Diverting all incoming water (primarily boiler blowdown) to the lined pond
- Recirculating the water in the Cooling Pond
- Installation of an aerator in the Cooling Pond

Based upon review of the report submitted to DEQ, the Department has concluded that Kronospan is responsible for the following two (2) violations of Oregon environmental law:

VIOLATIONS:

Monitoring Period	Violation	Class	Number of Violations
June 16, 2025	Violating a technology based effluent limitation, in a WPCF Permit if: (B) the discharge is outside the permitted pH range by 1 pH unit or less; OAR 340-012-0055(3)(b).	III	1
June 18, 2025	Violating a technology based effluent limitation, in a WPCF Permit if: (B) the discharge is outside the permitted pH range by 1 pH unit or less; OAR 340-012-0055(3)(b).	III	1

Class I violations are the most serious violations; Class III violations are the least serious.

This notice is a Warning Letter. DEQ does not intend to take formal enforcement action at this time. However, should you repeat this violation, the matter may be referred to DEQ's Office of Compliance and Enforcement for formal enforcement action, including assessment of civil penalties and/or a Department order. Civil penalties can be assessed for each day of violation.

If you believe any of the facts in this Warning Letter are in error, you may provide information to me at the office at the address shown at the top of this letter. DEQ will consider new information you submit and take appropriate action. The Department endeavors to assist you in your compliance efforts. Should you have any questions about the content of this letter, feel free contact me in writing or by phone at 541-246-4562. In addition, if you desire any follow-up technical assistance, please contact Anna.Morgan-Hayes@deq.oregon.gov.

Sincerely,



Anna Morgan-Hayes
DEQ Water Quality Permitting & Compliance

ec: Mike Hiatt, DEQ Water Quality Permitting
Carl Makepeace, DEQ Water Quality Permitting

Attachment 1: Letter of Noncompliance, Kronospan, June 19, 2025

Kronospan La Grande, LLC
Particleboard Plant
62621 Oregon Hwy 82; LaGrande, OR 97850
T 541-962-2100
F 208-452-1982



June 19, 2025
Anna Morgan-Hayes
Eastern Region Water Quality Permitting and Compliance
Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
475 NE Bellevue Dr., Suite 110
Bend, OR 97701

RE: WPCF 103044 Issued January 9th, 2025 Schedule A, Condition 4

The Kronospan La Grande Facility, as of the date shown upon my signing, is in substantial compliance with the Schedule A, Condition 4. Effluent Limits included in WPCF 103044, issued January 9, 2025.

The Kronospan La Grande Facility permit condition 4 refers to our Cooling Water Pond (CWP)'s pH level, stating that it needs to be between a pH of 6.5 and 8.5. Currently with the CWP, it is experiencing a major algae bloom causing the pH to rise. On 06/16/2025 8:15 AM the CWP was tested for pH and reached a value of 8.56. Water from the Deep Well was pumped to the pond system but due to the pond being close to full capacity, we could only fill for approximately 40 hours' worth equaling to 647,946 gal of water. On 6/18/2025 7:51 AM the pH was tested again and reached a value of 8.74. This date is the officiating date confirming that the pond is out of compliance.

Corrective actions taken include diverting all incoming water (primarily boiler blowdown) to the lined pond, using the CWP pump-to-pump water from the bottom to the top of the CWP to recirculate water, and an aerator was purchased and will be installed upon arrival. This letter is to satisfy conditions for Schedule F, Section D.4 reporting requirements. If you have any questions or concerns my contact, information is below.

Ryan Escobar

Kronospan EHS Manager La Grande, OR

Office Number: 541-962-2126

X 

Ryan Escobar
EHS Manager
6-19-25