

## **DENR orders probe on garbage operator**

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Environment secretary Roy Cimatu has ordered an urgent and full investigation of the dumping into the Manila Bay of voluminous solid wastes coming from the marine loading transfer station of garbage operator Philippine Ecology System Corp. (Phileco).

“It would be in the public interest to hold a full investigation to determine the liability of Phileco to the fullest extent possible,” Cimatu said after he inspected Phileco’s Vitas Marine Loading Station (VMLS) at Pier 18 in Tondo, Manila.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said the inspection was conducted following the adverse findings of the Environmental Management Bureau-National Capital Region (EMB-NCR) on Phileco involving its Tondo transfer station.

In a September 25 notice of adverse findings signed by director Vizmindia Osorio, the EMB-NCR noted several violations of the conditions in the environmental compliance certificate (ECC) issued to Phileco for the VMLS.

The EMB-NCR found the presence of solid wastes along Manila Bay’s shoreline, and that leachate from voluminous solid wastes dumped at the transfer station were directly discharging into the bay.

The EMB-NCR also pointed out that Phileco failed to meet the effluent standards for phosphate and total suspended solids and is discharging untreated wastewater directly into the bay.

The VMLS functions as a transfer facility for wastes collected in Metro Manila. The waste materials are transported by barge to the 40-hectare Navotas Sanitary Landfill, also operated by Phileco.

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