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## **It's Better to See the Glass More Than half Full Than Believe It's Empty**

*“CITGO Found Innocent Regarding Reporting Requirements and will Appeal Verdict on E.Q. Tanks”*

*By Terry Carter, president and CEO  
Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce*

If you just rely on any newspaper to get the facts, then you only see an issue from the newspaper's perspective. We now know that the U. S. District Court in Corpus Christi rendered an innocent verdict for CITGO on 2 counts and that the corporation will appeal the verdict on 2 other counts.

Counts 1 and 2 on which CITGO was found innocent related to the reporting of benzene quantity in wastewater streams during 2001 and 2002.

With regard to Counts 4 and 5, the charges relate to not having roofs on two wastewater equalization tanks. CITGO has said that Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations do not require roofs on wastewater equalization tanks, and in fact, the EPA has explicitly excluded equalization tanks from the regulations that require roofs. Corporate officials stated that CITGO voluntarily initiated the construction of roofs on the equalization tanks in 2004.

The regulations under which CITGO was charged had never been used before in a criminal prosecution. This decision can have far reaching affects. Members of the industry must now be concerned that the self- reporting rules intended for regulatory purposes are now used in criminal prosecutions.

It is important to note that the charges absolutely do not involve any releases or spills to the environment. CITGO, like our other local refineries, has an excellent environmental record and is confident that the verdict on Counts 4 and 5 will be reversed on appeal.

CITGO who has been a part of the Coastal Bend since the 1930's strives to be a good citizen wherever it operates. Its culture drives it to set high standards for corporate integrity and to give back by using its resources for a positive impact. Its philosophy of – presence – measures its standing in, respect for and contribution to our local communities.

Here are just a few basic facts about CITGO. More than 1,100 families earn their living working at the refinery. There are thousands more whose household income is indirectly related to CITGO's presence in our community. But CITGO's contributions to our community go well beyond just employing a lot of people.

As a matter of corporate policy, CITGO encourages its employees to spend time each month helping community based organizations throughout the area. These range from coaching Little League baseball teams, to serving as child advocates with CASA of the Coastal Bend, to

participating in programs sponsored by the United Way, American Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity, American Heart Association and many, many others.

Often, we take for granted such wonderful contributions. We begin to think they just happen. Unquestionably, that is not the case with CITGO and our other great corporate citizens. CITGO continues to make a deliberate decision to reinvest its capital, both monetary and human, in our community to help improve our quality of life. Last year, CITGO contributed more than \$400,000 to charitable and non-profit organizations in Corpus Christi. Its employees volunteered thousands of hours to community organizations. And, it spends more than \$139 million each year buying from local companies and paying property taxes. It makes a weekly payroll of \$1.4 million and has another \$460 million annual impact of additional jobs.

We should never take such wonderful corporate citizenship for granite. They do it solely because they know it is the right thing to reinvest part of their profits in the community where they operate.

These are difficult times for the CITGO family of employees, indeed our entire community. We have confidence in our judicial system. We also want to thank CITGO for all that it has done for our communities.

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