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NEWS RELEASE

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NORTHERN STATES POWER AGREES TO PAY \$1,300,000 TO THE WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR RECOVERY OF CONTAMINATION EXPENSES

MADISON – Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen announced today that the Wisconsin Department of Justice has settled a matter on behalf of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) with Northern States Power Company (NSP) doing business as Xcel Energy. This case was filed in the circuit court of Ashland County in order to recover on behalf of WDN funds WDNR spent in investigating contamination caused by NSP. NSP owns property on the Lake Superior shore in Ashland that was, at the turn of the century, the site of "coal gasification." The process generated hazardous wastes which seeped into the ground and into Chequamagon Bay.

WDNR investigated the pollution by using funds from its Environmental Repair Fund. State law requires that responsible parties reimburse the WDNR for such expenditures. NSP has agreed to reimburse WDNR \$1,300,000. The funds will immediately replenish the Environmental Repair Fund for other environmental remediation projects around the state. NSP has agreed to continue the clean-up plan in cooperation with the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Assistant Attorneys General Shari Eggleston and Cynthia Hirsch represented the state in this matter. The settlement was approved by Ashland County Circuit Court Judge Robert Eaton.

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