WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Department of Justice, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the State of California announced today that United Airlines, Inc. has agreed to a $850,000 civil penalty to resolve its violations of state and federal hazardous waste laws at its San Francisco International Airport facility.

During inspections conducted by the EPA in 1999 and 2001, inspectors found widespread violations of hazardous waste regulations throughout the United aircraft maintenance center. The violations included failure to close hazardous waste containers, improper labeling of hazardous waste containers, and storage of hazardous waste for longer than the allowable limits.

The facility -- which is United’s only aircraft maintenance center in the nation -- currently employs 5,200 people and operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

As part of the settlement, United worked with the EPA to develop an environmental compliance management system for the facility.

“Today’s settlement shows our strong commitment to enforce the proper management of hazardous waste in compliance with federal regulations,” said Tom Sansonetti, Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department’s Environment and Natural Resources Division. “In addition, United has agreed to conduct an independent audit at the facility of its Environmental Compliance Management System to further promote compliance.”

“Hazardous wastes must be handled safely and within the guidelines of the law to prevent any harm to human health and the environment,” said Wayne Nastri, administrator of the EPA’s Pacific Southwest region. “We are pleased that United Airlines has committed to improve hazardous waste management at its maintenance facility.”

“The resolution of this case demonstrates that state, federal and local agencies can work together to achieve compliance with laws regulating hazardous waste,” said Ed Lowry, Director of California’s Department of Toxic Substances Control.

Today’s settlement agreement is subject to approval by a federal bankruptcy court.