



Enforcement News

Search Warrant executed at Environmental Consulting Company, PW Environmental in Fraud Investigation

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SACRAMENTO – The California State Attorney General’s Office served a search warrant on December 11 at PW Environmental, Inc., (PW) an environmental consulting firm at 230 Dove Court in Santa Paula, Ventura County, as part of an ongoing investigation. Criminal and or civil filings may follow once investigators have a chance to review records seized during the search warrant.

The investigation involved claims submitted by PW to the State Water Resources Control Board’s (State Water Board) Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund (Cleanup Fund). The State Water Resources Control Board’s (State Water Board) Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund (Cleanup Fund) reimburses up to \$1.5 million per site for investigation and cleanup-related costs incurred at contaminated petroleum sites due to a leaking underground storage tank.

PW has conducted environmental cleanup work for sites that receive reimbursement from the Cleanup Fund since 1993. Currently, PW performs work at about 10 sites, but has previously worked at more than 40 sites. The sites are located in the Southern California counties of Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Orange, San Diego, Ventura and Kern.

“We hope by now consultants who have defrauded the Cleanup Fund and/or are considering doing so have received the message that the State Water Board is serious about investigating and prosecuting fraud against the Fund,” said Cris Carrigan, Director of the State Water Board’s Office of Enforcement.

The State Water Board’s Fraud, Waste, and Abuse (FWA) Prevention Unit was formed in 2010. Since the formation of the FWA Prevention Unit, three search warrants have been executed at three separate consulting firms based on FWA investigations. Julie and Kurt Hayden, owners of Hayden Environmental, Inc., were charged with criminal (May 2012) and civil counts (July 2012) of fraudulently obtaining money from the Cleanup Fund, following the serving of a similar search warrant during the first quarter of this year.

This search warrant is part of the State Water Board’s ongoing overall efforts to prevent and deter fraud against the Cleanup Fund.

A fact sheet on the State Water Board’s efforts to prevent, investigate, and prosecute cases of fraud against the Cleanup Fund is on the State Water Board’s website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/publications_forms/publications/factsheets/docs/fraud_efforts_factsheet.pdf

