
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

26 March 2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

CASE CLOSURE CONSIDERATION, UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK RELEASE, WALMART DISTRIBUTION CENTER #6021, 1300 SOUTH F STREET, PORTERVILLE, TULARE COUNTY, RB CASE NO. 5T54000532

This letter is to inform interested parties of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) consideration of closing the subject case (Site), and to request comments from interested parties.

The Site is on an approximately 110-acre parcel northwest of the intersection of South Main Street and East Yates Avenue. The property is identified as Tulare County Assessor's Parcel Number 269-060-009-000. The Site is operated as a distribution center with warehouse and truck maintenance buildings, service islands and an underground storage tank (UST) system. Potable water is provided by the City of Porterville public water system.

On 28 December 2021, a release of diesel fuel from damaged product piping associated with the fuel dispensers was discovered. Analytical results of soil samples collected on 3 January 2022 from beneath the piping at depths of 3.5-4.5 feet below site grade (bsg), indicated the presence of total petroleum hydrocarbons diesel range (TPHd) at concentrations to a maximum of 17,000 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg). TPHd was detected to a maximum of 910 mg/kg in a second set of samples collected on 6 January 2022, at depths of 8-9 feet bsg. Naphthalene and other diesel constituents were also detected. Considered evidence of a release of petroleum products from the UST system, the Tulare County Environmental Health Division (Tulare County) filed an *Underground Storage Tank (UST) Site - Unauthorized Release/Contamination Report* on 19 January 2022 and referred the case to the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) for regulatory oversight.

Central Valley Water Board staff (Staff) requested investigation of the release by a letter dated 27 January 2022. Site assessment soil sampling conducted during February and May 2022 identified the UST release and determined the concentration and extent of diesel constituents. Groundwater samples were also collected from the soil borings. Diesel constituents were detected in a groundwater sample collected from the boring beneath the release source area but not in samples from two nearby borings.

Approximately six cubic yards of diesel-impacted soil was excavated during February 2022 and transported to a licensed waste disposal facility during June 2022. An additional 20 cubic yards of impacted soil was excavated during October 2022 and transported offsite for disposal. The environmental consultant conducting the investigation and excavation determined that approximately 528 pounds of diesel constituents remain in soil to a maximum depth of 32 feet bgs.

Three groundwater sampling events were conducted between May and December 2023 from a network of five permanent monitoring wells. Based on the monitoring data, Staff concluded that the UST release lacked the mass and mobility to severely impact groundwater quality. The diesel or gasoline constituents benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylenes (BTEX), the fuel oxygenate methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), other fuel oxygenates and naphthalene were not detected by laboratory analysis of water samples. Low concentrations of TPHd were detected twice, with one detection due to possible laboratory contamination. The general absence of detections is consistent with a groundwater contaminant plume of limited lateral extent, less than 100 feet in length, based on the absence of detections in perimeter monitoring wells.

The State Water Resources Control Board adopted the *Low-Threat Underground Storage Tank Case Closure Policy* (Policy). This case has been evaluated for closure based on the evidence presented in the investigation reports and meets the relevant case closure criteria based on the fundamental principles contained in the Policy. There should be no risk to human health, public safety or the environment from the remaining petroleum product constituents, which are expected to degrade naturally.

This Public Notice has been transmitted to the interested parties in the Site vicinity and relevant agencies, as well as posted on the [Central Valley Water Board website](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/public_notices/) available at (http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/public_notices/) Underground Storage Tank – Decisions Pending, Case Closures. Details of the assessment are also available to interested parties through the [State Water Board's GeoTracker website](http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/): (<http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>).

You may participate in the case closure process by reviewing reports, asking questions, and providing comments on the proposed closure. The Central Valley Water Board's case number is 5T54000532. Please submit any comments regarding the proposed case closure to the Central Valley Water Board's Fresno office by **28 May 2024**.

Interested parties with questions or comments regarding the Site or the proposed actions should contact the case worker, John Whiting at 1685 E Street in Fresno at (559) 445-5504, or by email at John.Whiting@waterboards.ca.gov.

Upon completion of the public comment period, and in the absence of any substantive comments against closure, the Central Valley Water Board staff will direct that the monitoring wells be properly destroyed and that any remaining investigation derived waste be removed and properly managed. If no problems are discovered during a final Site inspection a case closure letter will be prepared.