

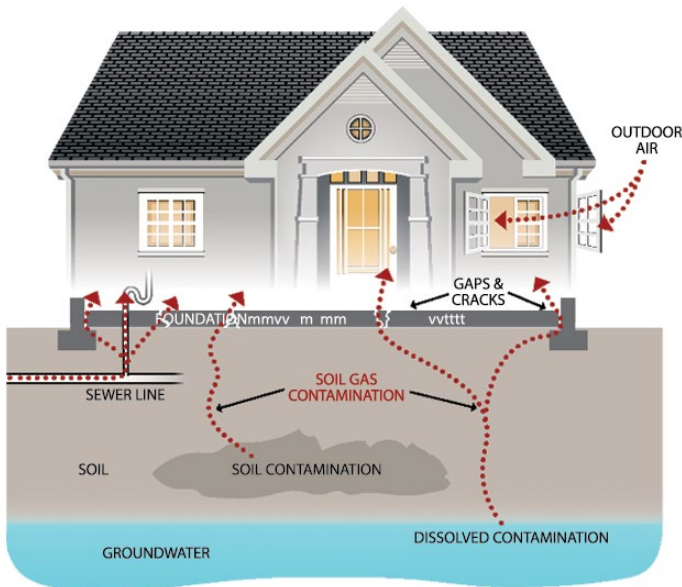
## Overview

For decades, the Water Boards and partner agencies have labored to protect California from the effects of chemical contamination, resulting in cleaner air, water, and soil for our citizens; however, some communities have limited resources to clean up contamination, resulting in an inequitable distribution of health and environmental risks. Contaminated properties put a burden on the state and often disproportionately impact disadvantaged, underserved, and/or rural communities. Cleanup of these properties benefits California by increasing health and safety, encouraging property reuse, and restoring safe drinking water sources.

## Human Health Risk

Some contaminated properties pose little risk to a community, while others cause serious health or environmental issues.

## Vapor Intrusion

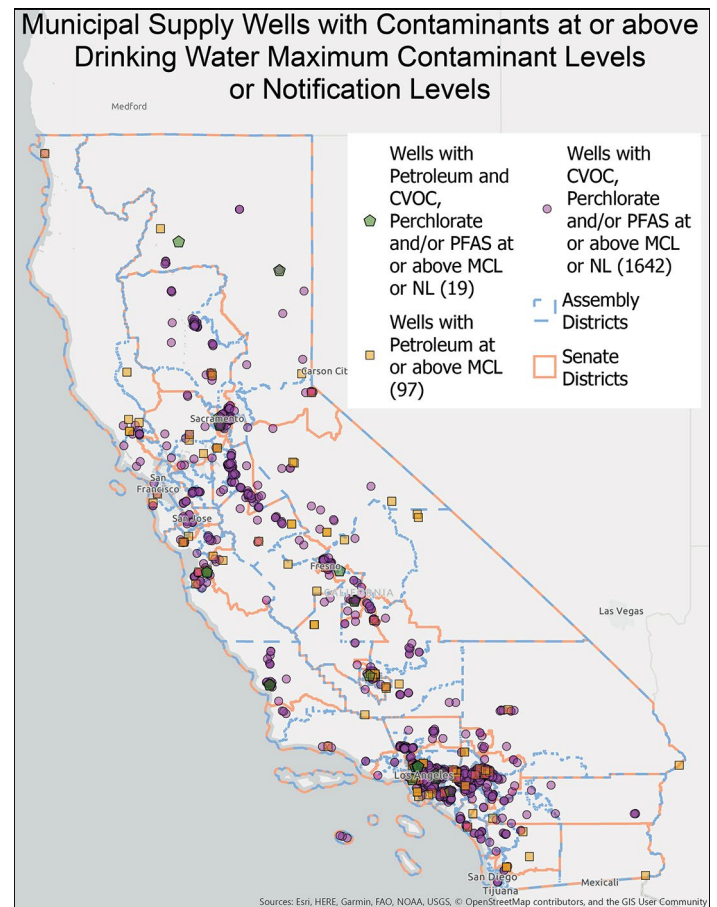


Inhalation of harmful vapors from contamination off-gassing is a significant health hazard. These vapors are often

colorless and odorless and are difficult to control without proper cleanup of the underlying contamination.

## Groundwater Contamination

Man-made chemicals have impacted groundwater across the state, exposing Californians to potentially harmful contaminants. Around 85% of Californians depend on groundwater for some portion of their drinking water, and groundwater remains a critical resource for farmers, especially in the Central Valley and Central Coast.

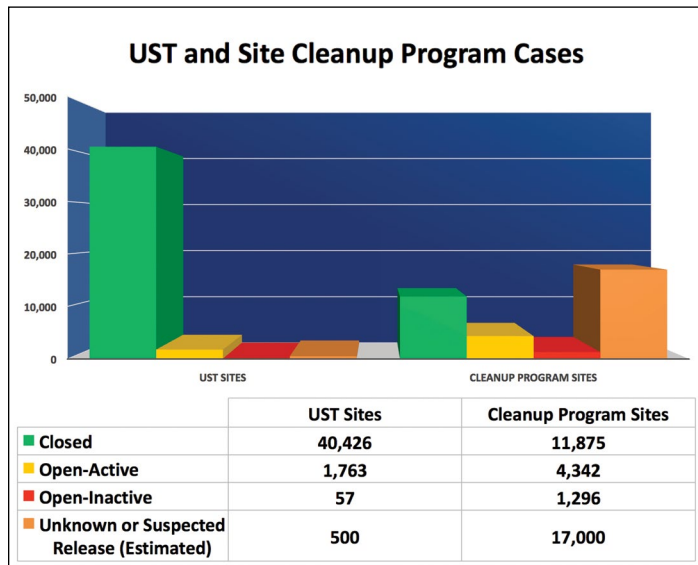


Hundreds of drinking water wells have been impacted by contamination, requiring costly treatment or replacement to protect human health.

## Cleanup Funding

### Underground Storage Tank (UST) Cleanup Sites

The UST Cleanup Fund (Fund) reimburses owners and operators for expenses associated with cleanup of leaking USTs, with over 74% of open UST cleanup cases currently receiving financial assistance through the Fund. The Fund not only helps increase leaking UST site cleanup rates, but encourages current owners and operators to comply with necessary UST leak-prevention requirements to qualify for reimbursement.



### Cleanup Program Sites

Unfortunately, other cleanup programs lack the same resources to address impacts from more problematic and persistent chemicals, such as, chlorinated solvents and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). California's non-petroleum contaminated sites are funded through a "polluter pays" model, wherein the discharger is responsible for the cost of cleanup and state oversight. Unlike the Fund model that spreads the cost of cleanup and state oversight across the industry, the "polluter pays" model relies solely on well-funded responsible parties, providing no solutions for releases where the responsible party is insolvent. Currently, 23% of non-petroleum contaminated

sites are inactive because the responsible party cannot pay for cleanup to address the contamination. Of these inactive sites, approximately 40% are located within disadvantaged, underserved, and/or rural communities with a CalEnviroScreen score of over 75%.

	Petroleum Hydrocarbons	Chlorinated Solvents	PFAS
Human Health Risk	Moderate to Low	High	High
Degradation Potential	Naturally Biodegrades	Minimal Degradation	Minimal to No Degradation
Impacted Drinking Water Wells	116	847	540
Vapor Intrusion Threat	Low	High	Low
Sites Funded for Cleanup	18,513	82	0
Amount Funded	\$4.4 Billion	\$118 Million	\$0

## Bridging the Gap

The Fund's Site Cleanup Subaccount Program (SCAP), established by the Legislature in September 2014, funds cleanup at any cleanup site not eligible for the Fund (including non-petroleum sites) that poses an immediate risk to a community. However, SCAP funding is limited and has only been able to address roughly 1% of the highest risk contaminated sites in California.

## Looking Forward

With over 95% of all UST cleanup cases closed across the state, the Water Boards seek to apply that success to cleanup of higher-risk contaminated properties. Additional resources for SCAP could help the Water Boards leverage the knowledge and expertise of the Fund and apply it to prioritize and cleanup all of California's contaminated properties. Increased resources would also address inequities across the state by driving cleanup in disadvantaged, underserved, and/or rural communities, helping to benefit all Californians.

## Contacts

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## Program Links

**Site Cleanup Storyboard:** <https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/cleanup/>

**UST Cleanup Fund:** [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/ustcf/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/ustcf/)

**SCAP:** [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/grants\\_loans/scap/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/scap/)

**GeoTracker:** <https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>