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## Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

### Public Notice Pending Case Closure Former Southern California Gas Company Cathodic Protection Well ZR-16 7476 Graciosa Road, Santa Maria, California

*Si desea obtener información en español, póngase en contacto con Anthony Schuetze al (805) 542-4648.*

**March 19, 2025**

The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Coast Water Board) is the California state regulatory agency responsible for the protection of groundwater and surface water quality within the central coast region. As such, we are overseeing the soil and groundwater investigation at the Southern California Gas Company (So Cal Gas) Cathodic Protection Well ZR-16 site (Site) located at 7476 Graciosa Road, in Santa Maria, California (attached Figure 1). We are notifying the site property owner, surrounding property owners, and other potentially interested parties of the proposed closure of this case to provide you and others with an opportunity to comment on the Central Coast Water Board's intent to close this case.

Please provide your comments or concerns regarding closure of this Site Cleanup Program (SCP) case to the Central Coast Water Board by **April 18, 2025**. It is not necessary to respond if you have no comments.

Information on the SCP case investigation and cleanup is available for review at the State Water Resources Control Board's GeoTracker database:

[https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/profile\\_report.asp?global\\_id=T10000013052](https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/profile_report.asp?global_id=T10000013052)

### Site Background

In December 2018, the United States Geological Survey (USGS) presented the results of the Orcutt Oil Field Groundwater Study (USGS Groundwater Study) to Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Coast Water Board) and State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) staff. The purpose of the USGS Groundwater Study was to identify water quality impacts resulting from oil production in California and provided the results of a water sample collected from well ZR-16 in July 2018. Records indicate well ZR-16 is a cathodic protection well installed in February 1986. The July 2018 laboratory analytical results for well ZR-16 indicated detections of contaminants of concern consistent with oil field activities as well as select volatile

organic compounds (VOCs) and metals that are not typically associated with oil production.

The Central Coast Water Board issued an investigative order (Order) dated September 6, 2019, which required Southern California Gas Company to resample the cathodic protection well ZR-16 on the Divide Substation to confirm the presence of VOCs and metals and to analyze for total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) in groundwater. In addition, the Order required So Cal Gas (owner of well ZR-16) and Righetti Ranch Properties, LLC (property owner) to complete Site Audit and Chemical Usage Questionnaires to verify any chemical used or stored onsite.

In November 2019, well ZR-16 was sampled and the results confirmed the presence of various metals and VOCs within well ZR-16. In March 2021, well ZR-16 was destroyed, eliminating future potential impacts associated with the presence of the abandoned cathodic protection well and fluid contain in the vent pipe. In May 2021, soil boring SCG-B1 was advanced approximately 30 feet south of well ZR-16 to investigate the extent of soil and groundwater contamination in this area. The concentrations of contaminants of concern detected in groundwater samples and soil samples from SCG-B1 were inconsistent with the constituents and concentrations that were detected in the water sample collected from the vent tube at well ZR-16. The site investigation results indicate that the impacts to groundwater are localized in well ZR-16, and the nearest water supply well is over 1 mile away. In October 2021, a replacement cathodic protection well (B5986) was constructed in the Site vicinity. Therefore, the Central Coast Water Board determined that case closure was warranted based on site conditions.

### **Proposed Site Closure**

Site assessment activities indicated the extent of groundwater impacted by non-oil field related VOCs is limited to the area of former cathodic protection well ZR-16 and VOCs were not encountered in groundwater samples collected from site investigation boring SCG-B1 located 30 feet downgradient of well ZR-16. After reviewing the soil and groundwater investigation results, Central Coast Water Board staff finds that there is no significant threat groundwater resources, human health, or the environment from this Site. Residual pollutants remaining in groundwater are localized and limited in extent, and pollutant concentrations in groundwater are expected to continue decreasing to below cleanup goals in a reasonable time. Additionally, well ZR-16 has been destroyed. Therefore, no further groundwater monitoring, investigation, or cleanup is necessary at the Site, based on evaluation of existing data and information. Following the public comment period and resolution of any comments, the Executive Officer plans to issue a case closure letter. A draft Case Summary Form summarizing the case is available at: [Microsoft Word - Draft SCP Case Closure Summary Form SoCalGas ZR16 031025](#)

If you wish to obtain additional information, provide comments, or if you need assistance accessing GeoTracker or the Case Closure Summary Form, please contact Anthony Schuetze at (805) 542-4648 ([anthony.schuetze@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:anthony.schuetze@waterboards.ca.gov)) or Amber Sellinger at (805) 549-3866 ([amber.sellinger@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:amber.sellinger@waterboards.ca.gov)).

