

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD

October 2025

EMPLOYEE: Marilyn Petruescu

UNIT: UST Enforcement

TITLE: Engineering Geologist

SUPERVISOR/TITLE: Galvin Kauffman, Senior Engineering Geologist

Marilyn is an Engineering Geologist in the Underground Storage Tank Enforcement Unit. Marilyn has been with the Water Boards for 10 years. Marilyn's supervisor nominated Marilyn for this award for going above and beyond her work expectations to provide excellent communication with the regulated public.

Recently, Marilyn's supervisor assigned her some challenging, stalled UST Enforcement cases to move them forward. Most of these cases involve responsible parties that are, or have been, recalcitrant and unwilling to cleanup the petroleum release, for which they are responsible. Marilyn displays exceptional skills in communicating with these recalcitrant parties. She uses frequent and various communication methods such as emails, letters, phone calls, and in-person meetings to engage the parties. Many of the parties do not have a technical or environmental background or have a consultant to represent them. Marilyn uses plain language to help them understand the regulations, their legal responsibility, the implications of non-compliance, the funding options, and a beneficial pathway forward for everyone involved. Marilyn exhibits profound emotional intelligence with these parties, empathizing with their situation, since most of them acquired their property without understanding that it is contaminated or that they would be held responsible for cleanup by a government agency.

As a recent example of her professionalism, Marilyn demonstrated excellent competency when a responsible party requested an in-person meeting. She promptly planned, coordinated, and facilitated a meeting at the State Water Board's downtown office, involving staff from multiple units and the responsible parties. Marilyn managed the contentious party's demands and frustrations with responsiveness, professionalism, empathy, and a thorough understanding of the case and applicable regulations.

For her remaining challenging cases, Marilyn is making progress on these legacy stalled cases because of her determination to succeed and her outstanding ability to work with all stakeholders. Marilyn is a valuable member of the UST Enforcement Unit and deserves recognition for her accomplishments.