
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

PUBLIC NOTICE CLOSURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL CASE FORMER BURNEY MOUNTAIN POWER (SITE CLEANUP PROGRAM CASE GLOBAL ID T10000020481)

This will serve as notice that the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, (Central Valley Water Board) is soliciting comments from the public regarding the pending closure of a Site Cleanup Program case, Former Burney Mountain Power, at 37800 Energy Drive, Burney, Shasta County.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION COMMENT PERIOD:

6 May through 5 June 2025

SUMMARY:

On 3 December 2021, an unauthorized individual trespassed into the fenced area surrounding a transformer at the Sierra Pacific Industries, Burney Mountain Power Property, located at 37800 Energy Drive in Burney (Site). While removing copper wire, the trespasser broke a valve, releasing the entire contents of a 2,238-gallon oil-filled transformer tank onto the soil and gravel within a secondary containment area. The exact timing of the theft and subsequent release is unknown as the facility was unoccupied and not in operation at the time of the release. There was no immediate emergency response.

Total petroleum hydrocarbons as diesel (TPH-D) contamination was discovered in soil within the secondary containment area while investigating the release of transformer oil. Following two rounds of sampling, TPH-D ultimately became the primary contaminant of concern at the Site.

Central Valley Water Board staff (Staff) recommends closure of the following case:

Former Burney Mountain Power
Site Cleanup Program
Global ID T10000020481

Project history, rationale for closure and the process for providing comments are discussed in this public notice.

SETTING:

The Site is located approximately 2 miles northeast of Burney, on Highway 299 at an elevation of 3,130 feet above mean sea level. The property includes a former cogeneration power plant and associated transformer. The transformer is located inside a gravel bottomed and concrete walled secondary containment area which measures approximately 28 feet long by 38 feet wide and 12 to 18 inches tall.

Investigations and Remediation Activities

During the first site investigation on 13 January 2022, a 4-point composite soil sample was collected from the upper 1 to 2 feet of material within the containment area and analyzed for total petroleum hydrocarbons as gas, diesel, and motor oil (TPH-G/D/MO), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and metals. Results were compared to the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board [Environmental Screening Levels](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water_issues/programs/ESL/2019_ESL_Status_Sheet.pdf) (ESLs). These ESLs may be found at this link: (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water_issues/programs/ESL/2019_ESL_Status_Sheet.pdf)

TPH-D was the only parameter present in soil above ESLs. Results are summarized in Table 1 on the following page.

On 10 March 2022, approximately 1.5 feet of material were excavated from the secondary containment area. Once the material was removed, six samples were collected from the bottom of the excavation and analyzed for TPH-D, PCBs, and metals.

On 14 June 2022, an additional 2 feet of material was removed from the secondary containment area; the excavation was stopped when native soil was reached. Five confirmation samples were collected from the native soil at the bottom of the excavation and analyzed for TPH-D.

On 12 September 2023, an additional one foot of material was removed until a uniform layer of bedrock was reached at approximately 6 feet below original grade. The excavation was stopped when bedrock was reached.

Estimated Pollutant Mass Removed

In total, 203.57 tons of contaminated soil were excavated from the containment area and transported to Recology Ostrom Road Landfill in Wheatland, California. Approximately 1,774 pounds or 0.887 tons (249.9 gallons) of TPH-D were removed from the Site.

Table 1 Summary of TPH-D Soil Concentrations

Field Event	Number of samples	Range (mg/kg)
13 January 2022	1 composite	960
10 March 2022	6	14 to 13,000
14 June 2022	5	13 to 9,500
12 September 2023	0 (excavated to bedrock)	<u>Not Applicable</u>
San Francisco ESL for TPH-D	Residential	<u>260</u>
	Commercial	<u>1,200</u>
All other constituents were below the San Francisco Bay ESLs or within background.		

Rationale for Closure

Staff concludes that the Site does not pose a threat to human health and the environment based on available soil data and proximity to sensitive receptors. Based on Staff's review of Site information, key rationale for closure of this case include:

1. The nearest water body is a group of man-made ponds at a nearby wastewater treatment and truck wash facility approximately 0.26 miles southwest of the Site. The ponds are slightly higher surface elevation than the Site, making it unlikely that runoff from the Site could impact the ponds.
2. The nearest surface water is Burney Creek, which is located approximately 1.25 miles west of the Site, and is approximately 35 feet lower in elevation, indicating relatively flat terrain between the Site and the creek. Contamination from the Site is not likely to reach Burney Creek.
3. The nearest water supply wells are located upgradient of the Site. One well is approximately 3,300 feet upgradient and two are approximately 4,800 feet upgradient.
4. The Site is within the Burney Water District service area.
5. Soil impacts have been sufficiently delineated.
6. Active remediation during three separate excavation events, ultimately to bedrock, removed the majority of the contaminant mass.
7. Any residual TPH-D will naturally attenuate in the environment through adsorption, dispersion, dilution, volatilization, and biological degradation.

8. This site meets the requirements for closure under Groundwater-Specific Criterion (5)a of the Low-Threat Underground Storage Tank Case Closure Policy. While this policy does not specifically address petroleum release scenarios other than underground storage tanks, if a particular site with a different petroleum release scenario exhibits attributes similar to those which this policy addresses, the criteria for closure evaluation may apply.

WHERE DO I SEND COMMENTS?

All interested agencies, groups and persons wishing to comment on the pending case closure must provide these comments in writing. The comments must be submitted by **5 June 2025** to the Central Valley Water Board's office at:

Central Valley Water Board
364 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 205,
Redding, CA 96002

WHERE DO I GET MORE INFORMATION?

General information regarding the Site can be obtained from the State Water Resources Control Board's [GeoTracker](https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov) web site at: (<https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov>) (please enter **T10000020481** into the search bar).

If you do not have access to the internet, you can make an appointment to review case files in our office at the footer address. Appointments can be made during regular business hours, which are 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday.

This letter serves as notice of a 30-day public comment period. Please send written comments to me at the footer address. To be timely, we must receive written comments by 5:00 pm, **5 June 2025**.

For information, please call Jack Rayl, Engineering Geologist, at (530) 224-4995 or by email at Jack.Rayl@Waterboards.ca.gov.