
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

15 May 2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

CASE CLOSURE CONSIDERATION, UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK RELEASE, FORMER LARRY FRANKS AUTOMOTIVE, 10587 14TH AVENUE, ARMONA, KINGS COUNTY, EMERGENCY, ABANDONED AND RECALCITRANT (EAR) ACCOUNT SITE #R17-201, RB CASE 16000127

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 Former Larry Franks Automotive (Site) is on the east side of 14th Avenue, just north of Highway and Railroad Avenues in the town of Armona, Kings County, and is identified as Kings County Assessor's Parcel Number 017-070-086-000. The Site was formerly a commercial fueling facility and currently operates as a tire and automotive service. Gasoline was formerly stored in six single-walled steel underground storage tanks (USTs). Potable water is provided to the Site by the Armona Community Services District water system.

Evidence of a release from the UST system was discovered during March 1988 when total volatile petroleum hydrocarbons (TVH) and benzene up to 1,355 and 1.3 milligrams- per- kilogram (mg/kg), respectively were detected in soil samples collected beneath the USTs. Toluene, ethylbenzene and xylenes were also detected. The Kings County Division of Environmental Health Services (Kings County) filed a UST Unauthorized Release (Leak) Contamination Report on 21 April 1988.

With Kings County oversight, three groundwater monitoring wells were installed and initially sampled during December 1989. Sample analysis indicated TVH and benzene up to 390 and 3.9 micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g/L}$), respectively with toluene and xylenes also detected. Since groundwater was affected, Kings County referred the case to the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) for regulatory oversight by a letter dated 31 May 1990. Groundwater was sampled two more times through 1993, but no other investigation or cleanup was conducted.

The USTs were removed during December 1992. Total petroleum hydrocarbons as gasoline (TPHg) was detected up to 4,000 mg/kg and toluene, ethylbenzene and xylenes were also detected in samples from beneath the USTs and dispensers.

Investigation resumed during August and September 2025 with funding from the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund's Emergency, Abandoned and Recalcitrant (EAR) Account program. Soil samples were collected to determine the extent, concentration and possible health risk from remaining fuel hydrocarbons. Soil vapor was sampled to evaluate health risk from petroleum vapor. Replacement monitoring wells were installed and sampled to determine if gasoline and diesel constituents remained in groundwater.

Soil sample analysis indicated little remaining hydrocarbon mass. Gasoline range organics (GRO) were not detected. Diesel range organics (DRO) were less than 100 mg/kg and most detections were less than 10 mg/kg. Benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylenes (BTEX) were not detected. Benzene, naphthalene, methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE) and other fuel oxygenates, and naphthalene were also not detected in soil vapor.

There were no detections of DRO, BTEX, naphthalene or fuel oxygenates during three groundwater sampling events during 2025 and 2026. GRO was detected in one sample from one sampling event at 55 µg/L, slightly more than the laboratory reporting limit.

The State Water Board adopted the *Low-Threat Underground Storage Tank Case Closure Policy* (Policy). This case was evaluated for closure based on evidence presented in the investigation reports and meets the relevant closure criteria contained in the Policy. There should be no risk to human health and safety or the environment from the remaining petroleum product constituents, which should continue 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](http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/) website: (<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 5T16000127. Please submit any comments regarding the proposed case closure to the Central Valley Water Board's Fresno office by **15 July 2026**.

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, Central Valley Water Board staff will direct that soil vapor sampling points and groundwater monitoring wells be properly destroyed, and 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.