



# Enforcement News

## Settlement of Negligence Dispute Bars L.A.-Based Storage Tank Cleanup Firm from Working with State Water Board

*Ami Adini & Associates Still Faces Court Action for Submitting False Information to Receive Payment*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**SACRAMENTO** – The State Water Resources Control Board, with assistance from the California Office of the Attorney General, has reached a settlement agreement with Ami Adini & Associates, Inc., over allegations it was negligent in conducting cleanup of petroleum contaminated underground storage tank sites.

Under the terms of the agreement, Ami Adini & Associates will forgo more than \$1 million in reimbursements it was seeking from the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund (Cleanup Fund), and is debarred from future work with any State Water Board programs. The prohibition extends to all work overseen, directed, funded, submitted to or administered by the State Water Board.

Ami Adini & Associates, located in Los Angeles and owned by Ami Adini and Elie Balas, provided investigation and remediation services at petroleum contaminated gasoline stations. The company has worked at more than 70 sites in the counties of Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange, San Diego, Santa Barbara, Humboldt, Sonoma, San Mateo, and San Joaquin.

This settlement resolves the State Water Board's allegations of professional negligence. However, the State Water Board's complaint alleging Ami Adini & Associates submitted false information to receive payment from the Cleanup Fund for work not performed and supplies not used is set for trial in 2017. The State Water Board's action alleging submittal of false information was consolidated with the whistleblower suit filed by a former employee of Ami Adini & Associates.

"Pursuing an action for professional negligence demonstrates that the State Water Board is serious about protecting the resources of the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund from waste and abuse," said Cris Carrigan, director of the State Water Board's Office of Enforcement. "Consultants should not be able to bilk the fund for services that are not necessary or reasonable. We think this sends a message to claimants and consultants that cleanup alternatives need to be continuously evaluated for effectiveness. Soil and groundwater



cleanup alternatives need to be implemented in a fashion that achieves site closure in a reasonable amount of time.”

The stipulated agreement can be viewed on the [Office of Enforcement's website](#).

For more information on the State Water Board's efforts to prevent, investigate and prosecute cases of fraud, waste and/or abuse against the Cleanup Fund, see the [fact sheet](#).

Suspected fraud, waste and/or abuse against the Cleanup Fund can be reported by email at [reportfraud@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:reportfraud@waterboards.ca.gov), by toll-free message line (1-855-263-0863), or by mailing or faxing a Fraud Reporting Complaint Form to the State Water Board at:

State Water Board  
Office of Enforcement  
P. O. Box 100  
Sacramento, CA 95812  
Fax: (916) 341-5896

The Fraud Reporting Complaint Form can be found [online](#).

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