

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
 CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
 SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT – Mary Rose Cassa
 MEETING DATE: January 12, 2011

ITEM: **6.B**

SUBJECT: **Cleanup Programs – Status Report including Case Closures**

CHRONOLOGY: The Board receives semi-annual status reports on this subject.

DISCUSSION: This is a semi-annual status report for the Board’s three cleanup programs: Underground Storage Tank (UST) Cleanup Program, Site Cleanup Program (SCP), and Military Cleanup Program (also known as the Department of Defense or “DoD” program). These programs oversee the investigation and cleanup of sites that have caused soil and groundwater pollution.

Case Closure Progress

The table below shows case closure targets for the current fiscal year (FY 10-11) and case closures for the first six months of FY 10-11, broken out by program. We expect to meet our case closure targets for FY 10-11.

Cleanup Program	FY 10-11 Case Closures		
	Target	Actual (first 6 months)	% of Target
UST	30	24	80%
SCP	20	9	45%
DoD	40*	22	55%
Total	90	55	61%

* internal target (no statewide target)

Performance Measures

The Water Boards are about three years into an effort to use performance measures to show the public what our programs accomplish (e.g., the State Water Board’s “My Water Quality” portal). For FY 10-11, the cleanup programs collectively are on pace to meet or exceed targets for the performance measure “number of cases closed” (results are shown above). This measure indicates the elimination of threats to human health and water quality.

We are lagging behind the target for the performance measure “number of cases starting active remediation” in two of the three cleanup programs (results are shown below). This measure indicates the transition from site investigation to actual cleanup. We have less experience with the second performance measure and expect our results to improve over time.

Cleanup Program	FY 10-11 Cases Starting Active Remediation		
	Target	Actual (first 6 months)	% of Target
UST	1	2	200%
SCP	5	2	40%
DoD	10	0	0%
Total	16	4	25%

Underground Storage Tank Program: Low-Threat Closure Policy

In October 2010, the State Water Board circulated for comment a draft Low-Threat Case Closure Policy for leaking underground fuel tank (LUFT) cases. The draft policy includes specific criteria that can be used by regulators to identify low-threat LUFT cases. The criteria include numerical goals for soil and groundwater contamination and for proximity to drinking water supply wells. The draft policy directs regulators (Regional Water Boards and local oversight agencies) to close low-threat LUFT cases immediately.

We have been actively using low-threat criteria to close LUFT cases for a number of years and recently extended the concept to solvent-impacted cases. We have previously encouraged State Water Board staff to develop a low-threat case closure policy for LUFT cases. We felt such a policy would foster greater consistency in the UST program state-wide and would reduce the number of petitions to the State Water Board regarding LUFT case closure.

We responded with a qualified endorsement of the policy. We support the low-threat closure concept and suggested ways to make the policy more robust. We suggested more rigorous definitions of “source” and “source control.” We also suggested adding a discussion of the scientific rationale for the numerical goals. The State Water Board received comments from other regions and local agencies and is considering major revisions to the draft policy. We will keep the Board informed of significant developments as they occur.

Environmental Screening Levels Update

The Board's Environmental Screening Levels (ESLs) were developed by this region as a tool to rapidly assess potential concerns at soil and groundwater pollution sites. The ESLs are being updated to reflect new information about migration of volatile chemicals from groundwater or soil into occupied buildings (known as vapor intrusion), based largely on a USEPA database of empirically-derived vapor intrusion rates. The Board's staff member who was working on this project assumed a position at USEPA in Seattle in 2010; consequently the position is vacant. As part of the update process, we asked our Cal/EPA sister agencies (the Department of Toxic Substances Control and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment) to comment on the draft update. Their comments were generally favorable; however, pending our ability to backfill our staff position, our efforts to complete this update have slowed. We anticipate making editorial changes and fixing some technical items in the near term, and then obtaining a limited external review before we proceed to address basic concerns about the relevance of the USEPA database.

A basic concern of the USEPA database is that, while generally useful, it contains very little California-specific data. We recently learned that USEPA is in the process of updating the database with a target of 2012, and they have specifically requested data from California sites. We are working with other regions (through the SCP statewide roundtable) to identify suitable sites and believe this effort will greatly improve the applicability of the database to our ESLs.

Staff Changes

The Board's cleanup programs have lost several long-time staff members to retirements - most recently, John Kaiser (June 30) and Anders Lundgren (December 31). John headed this region's DoD program; Alec Naugle is now the DoD Program Manager. Anders headed this region's Site Cleanup Program; Mary Rose Cassa is now the Site Cleanup Program Manager.

RECOMMEN-
DATION:

This is an information item only and no action is necessary.

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