

Fact Sheet, June 2011



Department of
Toxic Substances
Control

*Our mission is
to provide the
highest level of
safety, and to
protect public
health and the
environment
from toxic
harm.*



State of California



California
Environmental
Protection Agency

Draft Removal Action Workplan Portion of PG&E Former Watsonville-1 Manufactured Gas Plant Watsonville, California

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is issuing this fact sheet to inform the community about Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E's) proposed cleanup plan for the portion of the former Watsonville-1 manufactured gas plant (MGP) site (referred to in this fact sheet as the site) located at 618 Main Street in downtown Watsonville. DTSC is the lead state regulatory agency providing oversight of the investigation and cleanup activities at the site.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

June 27 – July 31, 2011

DTSC encourages you to review and comment on the draft Removal Action Workplan (draft RAW) and related California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Notice of Exemption for the site. The draft RAW describes the previous investigations and the proposed cleanup activities for the site. The draft RAW and other site-related documents are available at the information repositories listed on page 4 of this fact sheet.

DTSC is holding a 30-day public comment period beginning June 27, 2011, and ending July 19, 2011. All comments must be postmarked by July 31, 2011. All emailed comments must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on that same day. Please submit your comments to:

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Introduction

As a result of past gas manufacturing activities which occurred on the site in the early 1800's, the site became contaminated by gas manufacturing residuals. These include lampblack which contains polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in select areas of soil, soil gas (the pockets of air in the soil) and groundwater at the site. PG&E is proposing a combined cleanup approach that includes excavation of site soils, capping areas of the site, ongoing monitoring of groundwater and soil gas. An amendment of the current deed restriction on the site to require monitoring of site conditions is also being proposed.

Site Description and History

The site is half an acre and is located at 618 Main Street in the downtown section of the City of Watsonville. A 4,000-square-foot building is located on the southwestern portion of the site which was previously used as a PG&E customer service center and is now a restaurant. The remainder of the site consists of a paved driveway and parking lot with adjacent planters.

The site was previously part of a larger parcel that was occupied by the former Watsonville-1 MGP. The Watsonville-1 MGP was originally constructed in 1871 and was shut down in 1905. From 1905 until 1931, the site was used for a variety of industrial/commercial purposes. In 1931, Coast Counties Gas and Electric Company constructed a customer service office at the site, which was later used by PG&E. In 1989, the building was converted into its current use as a restaurant.

Site Investigations

Since 1985, a series of environmental investigations have been conducted at the site. Results of soil and soil gas sampling indicated that select areas of site soils contain the residues of historic MGP operations including PAHs, TPH, and VOCs.

Groundwater beneath the site contains relatively low levels of MGP residues

including PAHs and VOCs. Groundwater impacts are generally limited to the northeastern portion of the site and PG&E's ongoing monitoring indicates concentrations of chemicals appear to be naturally decreasing over time. Area groundwater is not used for drinking water or any other purposes.

No Health Risks to the Public

The site does not pose an immediate health risk to the public, animals or plants in the vicinity of the site. A Human Health Risk Assessment was completed for the site to determine if levels of petroleum hydrocarbons, PAHs and VOCs present in soil and groundwater are safe for future on-site workers and visitors. Based on this study, DTSC has determined there are some contaminants present from past MGP operations that are above DTSC's protective standards and that an overall cleanup plan should be developed for the site for long-term protection of public health and the environment.

In addition, a screening-level health risk evaluation was conducted based on recent soil gas sampling results to address the possibility that chemicals present in the subsurface could vaporize and travel through soil and into the building which could potentially impact the quality of indoor air. Results of the evaluation indicated that the air quality in the building would not be impacted and thus would be considered safe and acceptable for its current commercial use.

Draft Cleanup Plan Objective

The objective of the draft RAW is to summarize and evaluate the nature and extent of impacts at the site and to identify a preferred alternative which prevents or reduces potential risks to public health and the environment. Cleanup alternatives are evaluated based on effectiveness, ability to be implemented, and cost.

Before DTSC makes a final decision to approve, modify, or deny a RAW, it is made available for public review and comment

during a 30-day public comment period. All comments are reviewed and considered before DTSC approves the final RAW.

Cleanup Alternatives Evaluated

A variety of cleanup alternatives for soil, soil gas and groundwater were evaluated. The current site setting, usage and access were also considered in

evaluating alternatives to prevent people and animals from coming in contact with site soil, soil gas and groundwater. Each of these alternatives, with the exception of the No Action Alternative which is used as a basis for comparison, would adequately remediate the site and provide for protection of human health and the environment.

Cleanup Alternatives Evaluated

Soil – Alternatives Evaluated	Soil Alternative Summary
No Action	Nothing would be done with soil at the site; this is used to compare other alternatives against.
Capping, Institutional Controls, Focused Excavation with Off-Site Disposal	Parking lot areas of the site would be stripped of existing asphalt, re-graded and repaved, planter areas of the site with exposed soil would be excavated and backfilled with clean soil, deed restrictions would remain in place to limit certain types of site use and provide procedures for digging in soil underneath the cap and maintaining the cap.
Excavation of Impacted Soil and Off-Site Treatment	Impacted soil underneath the parking lot would be excavated and treated off-site at an appropriate permitted facility. The soil could then be reused, but would not be reused at the site.
Excavation of Impacted Soil and Off-Site Disposal	Impacted soil underneath the parking lot would be excavated and disposed of at an appropriate permitted landfill facility.
Soil Gas – Alternatives Evaluated	Soil Gas Alternative Summary
No Action	Nothing would be done with soil gas at the site; this is used to compare other alternatives against.
Soil Gas Monitoring and Institutional Controls	Soil gas levels would be regularly monitored until the soil gas source is removed and deed restrictions would continue on the site limiting future building construction without coordinating such construction with DTSC.
Soil Vapor Extraction and Treatment, Soil Gas Monitoring and Institutional Controls	A system to actively extract and treat impacted soil gas would be constructed; soil gas levels would be monitored regularly to ensure they are declining or until discontinuation is approved by DTSC, and deed restrictions would remain on the site.
Groundwater – Alternatives Evaluated	Groundwater Alternative Summary
No Action	Nothing would be done with groundwater at the site; this is used to compare other alternatives against.
Monitored Natural Attenuation	Groundwater at the site would be monitored on a regular basis to confirm that levels of chemicals are naturally declining over time.
In-Situ Bioremediation	Groundwater at the site would be actively treated in-place to stimulate the natural decline of chemicals in the groundwater.

Recommended Cleanup Alternatives

Based on evaluation of the cleanup alternatives, DTSC recommends focused excavation, capping and continued institutional controls for soil. In addition, DTSC recommends regular monitoring and continued institutional controls for soil gas, and monitored natural attenuation for groundwater. These alternatives offer long-term protection of the community and can be readily implemented given the site setting and limited access.

The following activities would be performed under the DTSC recommended alternatives:

- Removal of asphalt paving, on-site water drainage system, and small shrubs, bushes and vegetation;
- Removal of approximately 300 cubic yards of soil and asphalt with a small backhoe from planter areas to a depth of two feet;
- Placement of excavated soil in a truck and/or bin for off-site disposal;
- Backfill of excavated planter areas with clean, imported soil;
- Placement of 4 inches of asphalt and/or concrete on existing parking lot area;
- Construction of new storm water drainage system on-site; and
- Cleanup and restoration of all site areas including placement of new landscaping.

Safety & Dust Control During Cleanup

A site-specific safety plan will be prepared to guide all remediation work. In addition, the following actions will be implemented during this process to ensure public safety and to minimize dust:

- Installing temporary fencing with windscreens for security and dust control;
- Driving all vehicles at slow speeds while on the property and streets;
- Spraying or misting of work areas with clean water to control dust;

- Covering stockpiles with plastic sheeting;
- Securing trucks with covers before they leave the site;
- Brushing truck tires entering and exiting the site to remove soil and debris; and
- Monitoring the air at, and around the perimeters of, the site to ensure the amount of dust stays at safe levels.

Notice of Exemption for Cleanup

DTSC has prepared a Notice of Exemption (NOE) for the proposed cleanup, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The NOE document states that the proposed cleanup will not have a significant impact on human health and the environment because of the relatively small amount of contaminated soil to be removed, short project duration, and the controlled manner in which the contaminated soils will be dug out, loaded onto trucks and taken away to an approved/permitted facility for lawful disposal.

Next Steps

At the end of the public comment period, DTSC will review and consider any public comments received and make any necessary revisions to the draft RAW prior to final approval. Also, a Response to Comments document will be mailed to everyone who submits a comment and provides their name and address.

If the draft RAW is approved, cleanup activities will likely begin in early 2012. Cleanup and restoration activities will last about ten weeks, and will occur between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Trucks transporting soil from and to the site will only use city-approved truck routes. After the cleanup process is completed, soil testing will be conducted to confirm cleanup goals have been achieved and then PG&E will submit a Removal Action Completion Report to DTSC for review and approval.

Where to Find Project Documents

DTSC encourages you to review the draft RAW, NOE, and other site-related documents which are available at the information repositories listed below:

Watsonville Public Library

275 Main Street Suite 100

Watsonville, CA 95076

(831) 768-4300

Hours: Monday – Thursday, 9:30 am – 8:00 pm

Department of Toxic Substances Control

Regional Records Office

700 Heinz Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94710

(510) 540-3800

Please call for an appointment

Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Copies of key technical reports, fact sheets and other site-related information are also available online at DTSC's website: at www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov.

All documents made available to the public by the DTSC can be made available in an alternate format (i.e. Braille, large print, etc.) or in another language as appropriate, in accordance with state and federal law. Please contact Veronica Lopez-Villasenor for assistance.

Who to Contact for More Information

If you have any questions about the project or cleanup activities, please contact:

Henry Chui

DTSC Project Manager

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Veronica Lopez-Villasenor

DTSC Public Participation Specialist

Toll-Free (886) 495-5651 (Press 5 and 3)

or (916) 255-3651

vlopezvi@dtsc.ca.gov

Media Inquiries:

Jeanne Garcia

DTSC Public Information Officer

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Notice to Hearing-Impaired Individuals

You can obtain additional information about the site by using the California State Relay Service at 1 (888) 877-5378 (TDD). Ask them to contact Veronica Lopez-Villasenor at (916) 255-3651 regarding the project.

Summary of Proposed Cleanup

- DTSC is proposing a cleanup plan for a portion of the former Watsonville-1 manufactured gas plant site previously owned by PG&E.
- Under this plan, about 300 cubic yards of soil and asphalt (approximately 25 truckloads) will be excavated (dug up) and removed from the site; excavated areas will be backfilled with clean soil and a new asphalt parking lot (cap) will be constructed.
- The cleanup work will last up to 10 weeks.
- Measures to protect the community will be used throughout the entire project including: on-site and fence line dust monitoring, wetting soils to suppress dust, covering soil piles, stopping work on windy days, and others.
- The cleanup plan is available for public review and comment date June 27, 2011 through July 31, 2011.