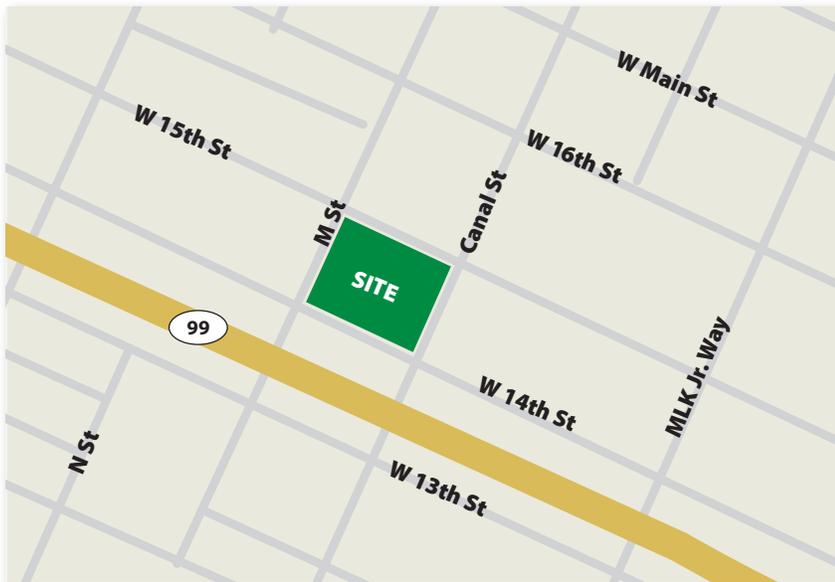


COMMUNITY Notice

The mission of DTSC is to protect California's people and environment from harmful effects of toxic substances through the restoration of contaminated resources, enforcement, regulation and pollution prevention.

Former Merced Manufactured Gas Plant Site 560 West 15th Street in Merced, California



The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) invites you to review and comment on a proposed cleanup plan for the Merced former manufactured gas plant (MGP) site (site) at 560 West 15th Street in Merced, California. The cleanup plan, called a draft Removal Action Workplan or RAW, details how the owner of the site, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), plans to address residues from historical gas-making activities that are present in soil and groundwater at the site.

The draft RAW proposes to address approximately 10,000 tons of contaminated soil by excavation and off-site disposal of some areas of shallow soil and by stabilizing deeper soil on site by adding in a cement mixture. After the cleanup is conducted, asphalt, pavement and landscaping would be restored and the site would return to its current use as a service center.



PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

**March 12, 2014 to
April 10, 2014**

DTSC invites you to review and comment on the draft RAW and related California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents for the site during a 30-day public comment period beginning March 12, 2014 and ending April 10, 2014. All comments must be received by no later than 5 p.m. on April 10, 2014. Send comments to:

Veronica López-Villaseñor, DTSC Public Participation Supervisor
Department of Toxic Substances Control
8800 Cal Center Drive
Sacramento, CA 95826
Veronica.Lopez-Villasenor@dtsc.ca.gov
916.255.3651

SITE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

PG&E owns the 3.7-acre property at 560 West 15th Street in Merced, California. The paved and fenced site operates as a service center for storing and distributing materials and equipment for PG&E work crews. The property includes four buildings, storage areas and a parking lot.

From 1883 to 1930, San Joaquin Light and Power operated a MGP in the northern half of the site. PG&E acquired the MGP in 1930. At that time, natural gas also became available in Merced, and the plant was shut down. By 1951, most of the structures from the former MGP had been removed. In the 1950s and early 1960s, PG&E acquired the southern half of the site.

SITE INVESTIGATIONS

Since 2008, several investigations have determined the extent of historic gas plant residues in soil, soil gas (the air in between soil particles) and groundwater at the site. These investigations identified varying levels of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and metals, primarily in the upper 2.5 to 15 feet of soil.

Groundwater beneath the site occurs at a depth of about 30 to 40 feet. Investigations show low levels of TPH, PAHs and VOCs in groundwater beneath the northeastern portion of the site and a tar-like liquid petroleum product at a depth of 40 feet in one well.

HUMAN HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENT

A Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) concluded the site, in its current condition, does not present a risk to site workers, surrounding populations, or the environment.

However, some form of site cleanup is needed to achieve the overall goal of long-term protection (i.e. 30-plus years) of human health and the environment should site conditions change. This will also allow for future redevelopment of the site.

CLEANUP OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The draft RAW summarizes the nature and extent of soil and groundwater contamination and identifies proposed alternatives to remediate the site. Methods to remediate the site were evaluated based on a variety of factors, including effectiveness, feasibility, regulatory and public acceptance, overall protection of human health and the environment and cost.

Cleanup Alternatives Evaluated:

Alternative 1: No Action – The site would be left in its current condition under this alternative. This alternative is used as a baseline against which to compare other alternatives.

Alternative 2: Capping with Limited Deep-Source In-Situ Soil Solidification/Stabilization (ISS) – The existing asphalt cover on the site would remain under this alternative to prohibit contact with underlying soils. Soil and liquid petroleum product found within the middle of the eastern portion of the site would be stabilized to a depth of 45 feet by mixing contaminated soil with a cement mixture. This action would solidify the contaminated soil in place so that it cannot move. If stabilization is not effective, soil selected for stabilization would be removed.

Alternative 3: Shallow and Limited Mid-Depth Excavation with Deep-Source ISS – Approximately 5,800 cubic yards (8,700 tons) of contaminated soil from a depth of 2.5 to 15 feet would be removed from various areas of the site under this alternative. Soil and liquid petroleum product found

within the middle of the eastern portion of the site would be stabilized to a depth of 45 feet by mixing impacted soil with a cement mixture to solidify the soil. If stabilization is not effective, soil selected for stabilization would be removed.

Alternative 4: Shallow and Full Mid-Depth Excavation with

Deep-Source ISS – This alternative is the same as alternative 3; however, approximately 2,800 additional cubic yards of TPH impacted soil between 10 and 15 feet below the surface would be removed from the site.

All alternatives include placement of a deed restriction on inaccessible portions of the property to limit certain types of future land use and to require quarterly groundwater monitoring for a minimum of five years. Groundwater monitoring would be conducted to confirm removal of contaminated soil improved groundwater conditions.

PROPOSED CLEANUP PLAN

Based on an evaluation of cleanup alternatives, Alternative 3 is recommended for the site. This alternative offers long-term protection of human health and the environment, while also balancing cleanup with the least amount of disruption to the community and with short-term impacts to the environment.

If the draft RAW is approved, the following activities would address historic gas plant residues:

- Removal and demolition of asphalt/concrete paving within on-site and off-site excavation areas;
- Phased removal of approximately 5,800 cubic yards (8,700 tons) of contaminated soil from a depth of 2.5 to 15 feet;
- Placement of excavated soil in trucks for off-site disposal;

- Stabilization of 1,000 cubic yards (1,500 tons) of soil to a depth of 45 feet by mixing a cement mixture into soil (or excavation, if stabilization is not feasible);
- Backfill and compaction of excavated areas with clean, imported soil;
- Site grading for proper drainage and installation of asphalt paving;
- Cleanup and restoration of on- and off-site work areas; and
- Ongoing monitoring to ensure the removal of impacted soils results in levels of chemicals in groundwater naturally declining over time.

Soil excavation is expected to begin in 2015, lasting about six months. Environmental controls, including air-, dust- and noise-monitoring and suppression, would protect the surrounding community during cleanup.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

As the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), DTSC conducted an Initial Study that determined the proposed project would not have a significant environmental impact. DTSC concluded a Negative Declaration was the appropriate document to prepare under CEQA. DTSC is seeking comments on the adequacy of the analysis contained in the Initial Study and proposed Negative

NEXT STEPS

After the close of the public comment period, DTSC will prepare a Responsiveness Summary to respond to comments received. This document will list the comments received and

how they were considered prior to making a final decision on the draft RAW. The Responsiveness Summary will be placed in the information repositories established for the site and sent to those who submitted comments.

WHERE TO FIND SITE DOCUMENTS

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

Merced County Library
2100 O Street
Merced, CA 95340
209.385.7643

DTSC - File Room
1515 Tollhouse Rd. Clovis, CA 93611
559.297.3929
Hours: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday – Friday
Call for an appointment.

Alternative Format: All documents made available to the public by DTSC can be made available in alternative format (i.e. Braille, large print, etc.) or in another language, as appropriate, in accordance with state and federal law. Contact Veronica Lopez-Villaseñor in the “For More Information” section.

EnviroStor Database: Copies of key technical reports, fact sheets and other site-related information are available online at DTSC’s EnviroStor website: http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report.asp?global_id=24490020.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the draft cleanup plan or to be added to the site mailing list, contact the following DTSC representatives:

Jeff Gymer, DTSC Project Manager
Jeff.Gymer@dtsc.ca.gov
559.297.3907

Veronica López-Villaseñor, DTSC Public Participation Specialist
Veronica.Lopez-Villasenor@dtsc.ca.gov
916.255.3651

Sandy Nax, DTSC Public Information Officer
Sandy.Nax@dtsc.ca.gov
916.327.6114