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SUBJECT: REVIEW OF THE DTSC APRIL 2014 DRAFT REPORT ON THE AUTUMNWOOD DEVELOPMENT, WILDOMAR, CALIFORNIA

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) report, "Autumwood Development Investigation Report Autumnwood Development, Wildomar, California," describes DTSC's efforts to determine if there is a source of contamination in the soil and subsoil environment of the Autumnwood development that may account for the illnesses reported by a number of community members. My understanding is this investigation was directed at finding any source of hazardous waste buried under or infiltrating the community, which is in the jurisdiction of DTSC's authorities and responsibilities. The objectives of the report are clearly laid out in the introduction: 1) determine if industrial chemicals, in particular volatile chemicals, are found in the soil and groundwater, and 2) if these chemicals are present, determine if they pose a health threat to the residents of the community.

I reviewed the draft report and found the approach taken in the sampling plan was consistent with the investigation's objectives. The sampling methodology and analytes chosen for the investigation seemed appropriate based on the previous sampling done in the community and the concerns expressed by the residents. While indoor sampling of aldehydes and other potential chemical irritants could provide helpful information on possible exposures not related to hazardous waste in soil or groundwater, we understand this is not within DTSC's purview.

The investigation indicates there does not appear to be generalized hazardous-chemical contamination in the soil and groundwater underlying the community. Indoor air contaminants measured in previous sampling studies probably came from the ambient air, off gassing from materials in the homes, or other sources. This finding is strengthened by DTSC's Environmental Chemistry Laboratory review of the Level 4 data packages from the analytical laboratories. The data is of sufficient quality for DTSC to draw its conclusion that there is no evidence for a hazardous chemical release in the soil and groundwater, and that no detected chemical vapors from the soil are infiltrating homes at levels that would explain illnesses reported by the residents. The one caveat to these findings is that the studies only reflect contaminant levels at the time of the studies and the results may not necessarily represent contaminant levels and exposures in previous years that might have resulted in illnesses.