

*Preventing environmental damage from hazardous waste, and restoring contaminated sites for all Californians.*



State of California



Department of Toxic Substances Control

# Public Involvement

FACT SHEET, May 2005

## The Borello Property Proposed Remediation Plan Is Available For Review

A 14-acre parcel of land, known as the Borello Property, is proposed for pesticide cleanup. The property is located along Peet Road in Morgan Hill, California 95037. (See site map on page two.) The property was recently rezoned from agricultural to residential land for future development as a residential subdivision. Soil containing pesticides (toxaphene and dieldrin) were found on the property during a site investigation at levels above acceptable standards. The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is overseeing the removal activities under a Voluntary Cleanup Agreement.

The Borello Property Draft Removal Action Workplan (Draft RAW) describes in detail the investigation and proposed recommendations to remove the pesticide contamination. We encourage you to review and comment on the proposed plan. The Draft RAW is available for your review at the Information Repositories listed on page 4. If you have questions about this site, please contact Mr. Jacinto Soto, DTSC Project Manager, at (510) 540-3842 or e-mail [Jsoto@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:Jsoto@dtsc.ca.gov).

### This fact sheet will provide you:

- History and background of the site
- Findings of the investigation
- Options for remediation the site (Draft RAW)
- Proposed activities for remediation
- California Environmental Quality Act - Notice of Exemption
- Next Steps

### Public Comment Period

We encourage you to review and comment on the Draft RAW. DTSC will hold a 30-day public comment period beginning May 20, 2005 and ending June 20, 2005. All e-mailed comments must be sent to the Department no later than 5 p.m. on June 20, 2005. Mail written comments to:

Mr. Jacinto Soto  
DTSC, Project Manager  
700 Heinz Avenue  
Berkeley, California 94710

A public meeting will be considered if one is request. Please submit a written request for a public meeting, including the issues to be raised, to the address above by the end of the public comment period.



### History and background of the site

The Borello Property was used as an apricot orchard from the early 1900s through the mid 1990s when the apricot orchard was replaced with a cherry orchard. On September 2004, the cherry orchard was removed and burned on site. The property is surrounded by orchards, residential homes and Santa Clara Valley Water District pumping station.

### Findings of the investigation

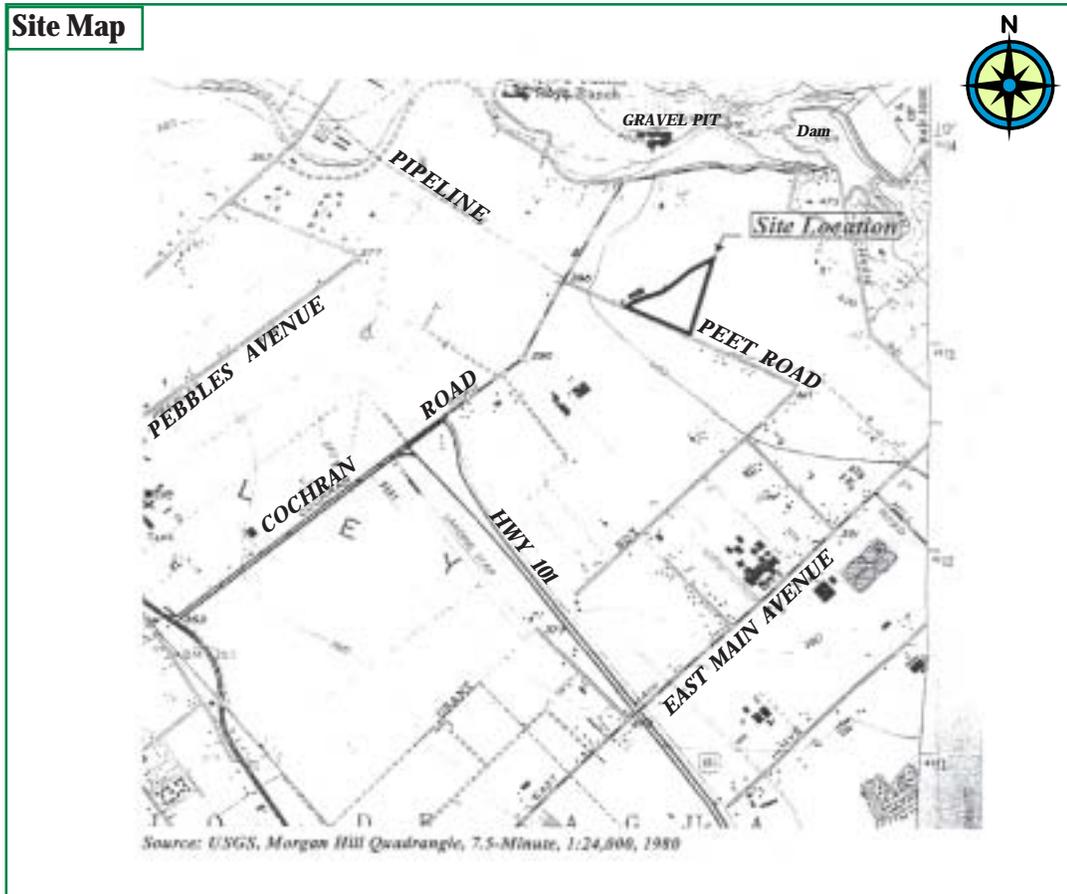
An environmental investigation was conducted from December 2003 through April 2004 to identify contamination at the site. Elevated concentrations of toxaphene and dieldrin were detected within the initial 2 to 2.5 feet of surface soil beneath the entire property. The highest level detected for dieldrin was 0.4 parts per million (ppm) and the highest level detected for toxaphene was 6.2 ppm. The cleanup goal for dieldrin is a maximum of 0.025 ppm and the toxaphene is a maximum of 0.04 ppm.

In the United States, the use of dieldrin was banned in 1974 and toxaphene was banned in 1990. People can get exposed to dieldrin and toxaphene by eating food like fish or shellfish from lakes or streams contaminated with either chemical, or by eating contaminated root crops, dairy products, or meats.

### Options for the site (Draft RAW)

The primary objective of the Draft RAW is to evaluate cleanup alternatives and to identify a preferred alternative which prevents or reduces potential risks to public health and the environment. A Draft RAW summarizes previous studies and identifies the possible removal alternatives. Removal alternatives are screened and evaluated on the basis of their effectiveness, ability to implement and cost. The Draft RAW then identifies the alternative DTSC recommends and believes is the most appropriate for the site.

Site Map



Before DTSC makes a final decision to approve or deny a Draft RAW, the Draft RAW is made available for public comment during a 30-day public comment period. All comments received from the public during the comment period are reviewed and considered before the Draft RAW is approved.

#### Preferred cleanup method

Three alternatives were evaluated for the Borello Property to clean up the pesticides.

- The first alternative was to take no action. This alternative will leave the contamination in place and restrict future use of the property to commercial use only.
- The second alternative was to remove 14,200 cubic yards of the contaminated soil. If this alternative is chosen, the soil is dug up and transported to an approved landfill.
- The third alternative proposes bio-remediation with Gene Expression Factor (GEF). GEF is a soil amendment which helps repair the existing bacteria in the soil and allows them to metabolize the pesticides into salt, carbon dioxide and water.

#### DTSC's Recommendation

DTSC believes that the bio-remediation with GEF alternative is the preferred cleanup method. Through the addition of additives and fertilizers, the population of soil bacteria will grow and consume the residual pesticides as a source of food. When the remediation of the soil is complete, the bacterial populations will return back to normal levels.

At no time during the process, do the bacteria represent a potential risk to the environment, people or animals that may cross, travel by or live near the site. As a natural biological process, bioremediation is considered a safe, low impact and effective method of removing pollutants from the environment.



*Example of a Ripper for ripping and mixing of soil*

#### Proposed activities

At the Borello Property, if the Bio-remediation process is selected, the following are the proposed activities.

- The entire site will be fenced so that that unauthorized personnel cannot enter the work area.
- The initial two feet of soil on the entire property will be mixed and blended with appropriate amounts of fertilizer, lime, protein compounds and organic material (cow manure). The soil will be ripped and mixed to assure uniform blending. The soil will be mixed at least twice a month.
- Irrigation lines will be set-up over the entire property and soil will be irrigated weekly to maintain a moist soil condition. Weekly irrigation allows the native bacteria colonies to bloom and metabolize the chlorine within the pesticides, thus changing the pesticides into non-toxic substances.
- Trained personnel will monitor the efficiency of bio-remediation process over the entire site.
- Airborne dust monitoring will be conducted at the site. Dust control measures during ripping and handling of contaminated soil will consist of spraying water onto the soil and work area. The dust-monitoring will consist primarily of direct-reading instrumentation in the work area throughout the daytime work schedule.

## **California Environmental Quality Act - Notice of Exemption**

As part of the Draft RAW process, DTSC has prepared a Draft Notice of Exemption (NOE) for this project as required by the California Environmental Quality Act. The Draft NOE states that the project will not have a potential for significant effects on the environment or human health because of controls in place during the cleanup of the contaminated soil.

### **Next steps**

After the close of the public comment period, DTSC will prepare a Response to Comments document. This document includes all of the comments we received about the Draft RAW and the proposed cleanup activities during the 30-day public comment period. It will also provide DTSC's response to those comments. A copy of the Response to Comments will be placed in the Information Repositories. Anyone who submits comments regarding the Draft RAW will receive a copy of DTSC's Response to Comments.

### **For More Information**

Please contact any of the following individuals with any questions or concerns you may have.

For questions regarding the Draft RAW or the NOE, please contact Mr. Jacinto Soto, DTSC Project Manager at (510) 540-3842.

For questions regarding the public participation process, contact Ms. Kim Rhodes, DTSC Public Participation Specialist at (916) 255-3651.

For media questions, please contact Ms. Angela Blanchette, DTSC Public Information Officer at (510) 540-3732.

## **Information Repositories**

The Draft RAW and related documents can be reviewed at the following locations:

**Morgan Hill Library**  
17575 Peak Avenue  
Morgan Hill, California 95037  
(408) 779-3196

**Department of Toxic Substances Control**  
700 Heinz Avenue  
Berkeley, California 94710  
File Room:  
Monday-Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
By appointment only (510) 540-3800

### **Notice to the Hearing Impaired**

TDD users can use the California Relay Service at 1-888-877-5378 and ask to speak with Ms. Kim Rhodes at (916) 255-3651.