



## Fact Sheet #5, October 2012

# Proposed Cleanup Plan for Former Athens Tank Farm Site Available for Public Review and Comment

A draft cleanup plan to address contaminated soil and groundwater at the former Athens Tank Farm site is available for public review and comment. The draft cleanup plan, called a Phase 1 Remedial Action Plan (RAP), describes in detail the environmental investigations conducted, findings and the cleanup process chosen to address contamination at a portion of the site. The draft Phase 1 RAP, if approved, will include excavation of limited areas of the site, along with the use of a cleanup technology known as Soil Vapor Extraction (SVE) for specific areas. Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a draft Mitigated Negative Declaration is proposed, because the draft Phase 1 RAP activities will not have a significant negative effect on public health and the environment. ***This draft Phase 1 RAP is a first part of future cleanup plans, and is not the final cleanup activity proposed for the site.*** Inside this fact sheet you will find information on:

- Why Cleanup is Necessary
- Site Location and History
- Proposed Cleanup Plan
- Safety and Dust Control Measures
- California Environmental Quality Act
- Where to Find Site Documents
- Next Steps

Sampling data for soil, soil gas, air and groundwater collected so far does **not** show an existing or future health risk to people living in the area or Park users under current conditions. However, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) recommend cleanup actions be developed and implemented to ensure long-term public protection from contaminated soil and groundwater and prevent future problems. If approved, DTSC and the Regional Board will oversee the remedial action and ensure work is performed in accordance with the plan. Earvin “Magic” Johnson Regional Park (Park) drinking and irrigation water is safe. Drinking and irrigation water is supplied by the Metropolitan Water District and Golden State Water Company and is obtained from different sources outside the community. It is tested regularly to ensure all federal and state drinking water standards are met.

### OPEN HOUSE AND COMMUNITY MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

*Thursday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012*

**Enterprise Park Gymnasium, 13055 Clovis Avenue, Los Angeles 90059-3432**

DTSC and the Regional Board invite you to an **Open House** that begins at **5:00 pm**, to discuss your questions and concerns regarding the former Athens Tank Farm site. A **Community Meeting** will begin at **6:30 pm** with a formal presentation on the proposed cleanup plan (draft Phase 1 RAP) and to receive your public comments. Please join us.

### 30-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

*October 25<sup>th</sup>, to November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012*

The draft Phase 1 RAP, CEQA Initial Study and draft Mitigated Negative Declaration and other related project documents are available for review at the Information Repository locations listed on page 4. We will consider and respond to all public comments before implementing field work. **Public comments must be postmarked or e-mailed no later than November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012, and sent to:** Teklewold Ayalew, Project Manager, Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, 320 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200, Los Angeles, CA 90013-1105, E-mail: [tayalew@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:tayalew@waterboards.ca.gov).



### **Why Cleanup is Necessary**

Environmental investigations at the site found methane, total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPHs), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) (which include hexane and benzene), lead and arsenic. While sampling data for soil, soil gas, air and groundwater collected so far does **not** show a health risk to people living in the area or Park users under current conditions, these contaminants found in soil, soil vapor and groundwater under some areas of the former Athens Tank Farm site are nevertheless at action levels that require cleanup to prevent future problems.

The environmental investigation and proposed site cleanup actions will be conducted under the oversight of the Regional Board with support from DTSC. Both agencies are under the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA).

### **Site Location and History**

The 122-acre site is located in Willowbrook, an unincorporated area within the County of Los Angeles. The former Athens Tank Farm Site area includes the Park, former Ujima Village Apartment Complex (UVA), and the Ujima Housing Corporation (UHC) properties. The site is bounded north by East 120<sup>th</sup> Street, west by Avalon Boulevard, south by El Segundo Boulevard, and east by single family residences. The area is now occupied by the former UVA, the Park and adjacent former Honey's Little Angels Day Care Center (*which relocated to 8300 South Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, 90044 in late July of this year*). The entire area of the former Athens Tank Farm, is collectively referred to as the "site".

The former Athens Tank Farm operated from the mid-1920s to mid-1960s as a site for oil storage and distribution. Ujima Village was constructed in the early 1970s as a private development funded by a mortgage insured by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In the early 1990s, HUD foreclosed on the property due to a mortgage default and took ownership of the property. HUD sold the Ujima Village Apartment Complex to the Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles in 1995. The state transferred ownership of the Park to the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation in 1987. In November 2007, ExxonMobil was notified by the Regional Board about soil conditions at the site. In response, ExxonMobil developed and implemented an environmental investigation plan which was approved in early 2008 by the Regional Board. Under the oversight of the Regional Board, ExxonMobil is investigating soil, soil gas and groundwater impacts at the site as follows:

- Soil vapor, shallow and deep soil site assessment of the Park and UVA/UHC;
- Groundwater investigation and monitoring;
- Investigation of ambient (background) metals concentrations;
- On and off-site soil vapor plume delineation;
- Air quality survey (indoor, outdoor, crawl space sampling) of UVA/UHC;
- Human Health Risk Assessment of the Park and UVA/UHC;
- Bi-weekly, monthly and quarterly methane and VOCs monitoring program;
- Interim Remedial Action Plan – Soil Vapor Extraction Pilot Test; and
- Ongoing parcel by parcel air quality investigation (crawl space, indoor and outdoor air and soil vapor sampling) of 36 off-site homes.

### **Investigation Results**

An extensive sampling and analysis of soil, groundwater, soil vapor and outdoor air has been conducted. Hundreds of soil, soil vapor, indoor air, outdoor air, and groundwater samples have been collected at the site and the neighborhoods east and south of the site. Results of the investigation to date indicate that the site is impacted with petroleum hydrocarbons and other petroleum related compounds.

The investigation also included a Human Health Risk Assessment for chemical contaminants found in soil, soil vapor and groundwater beneath the Park and UCA/UHC properties and concluded that these contaminants do not pose an unacceptable risk to human health. The Regional Board and DTSC have ordered additional offsite air quality investigation at 36 properties, identified based on proximity to the vapor probe locations and confirmed elevated levels of VOCs and methane, in the neighborhood east of the site. This ongoing offsite air quality investigation will provide information for evaluating whether vapor intrusion into homes east of the site is occurring. Offsite air quality testing at several neighborhood properties conducted to date indicate that methane and VOCs detected in crawl space and indoor air samples at the homes do not pose a health risk or safety hazard.

As part of the environmental investigation, the Human Health Risk Assessment was reviewed by DTSC. DTSC uses specialists in toxicology (the study of toxic effects of chemicals) to perform or assist with risk assessments. A Health Risk Assessment (HRA) is a scientific tool used to predict the likelihood that chemicals on the site could be harmful to people or the environment. The goal of the HRA is the estimation of hazards posed by toxic chemicals in the environment using the compilation and evaluation of environmental and toxicological data to support cleanup efforts.

For this site, a HRA was conducted in accordance with federal and state statutes and regulations. The purpose of the HRA is to help develop the goals and guidelines for cleaning up the site. The HRA evaluates potential (current and future) adverse human health effects that could result from hazardous releases from the site and whether current or future chemical exposures will pose risks to a community.

#### **Proposed Cleanup Plan – Draft Phase 1 Remedial Action Plan (RAP)**

To address methane and VOCs, a cleanup technology called Soil Vapor Extraction (SVE) is proposed. To address lead and arsenic, soil excavation is proposed.

#### **What is Soil Vapor Extraction (SVE) and Excavation?**

SVE is the process of pulling out the air found in the spaces between soil particles (referred to as soil vapor) in order to remove chemical compounds. Excavation (removal) uses construction equipment to remove about 72 cubic yards (7-10) truckloads) of impacted soil that contains chemical compounds. After completing the proposed cleanup, SVE wells will be closed and excavated areas will be backfilled with certified clean soil at the site and the area will be restored to conditions existing before work began (e.g., grass sod in Park areas).

#### ***Where is the proposed SVE and excavation taking place, and how were those areas chosen?***

This proposed Phase 1 of SVE will take place along Clovis Avenue and the southeastern boundary of the Park. Excavation activities will occur at two (2) locations within UVA, two locations within UHC and seven (7) locations within the Park. Locations were chosen in collaboration with the Regional Board and DTSC.

This draft Phase 1 remedy will protect Park users and surrounding residents from being exposed to the TPHs, VOCs, lead and arsenic identified at the site.

#### **Safety and Dust Control Measures**

To protect on-site workers and the surrounding community during the proposed cleanup activities, the following safety measures will be implemented under Regional Board and DTSC oversight:

- Site Security – The site will be secured and only authorized personnel will be allowed on-site.

- **Dust Controls** – Water will be sprayed when soil is loaded and unloaded during excavation to reduce dust emissions. Trucks will maintain low speeds and truck contents secured with tarp before leaving the site. To minimize risk of cross-contamination and/or offsite “tracking” of impacted soil, trucks will be loaded on plastic and kept on specified project haul routes to and from the soil stockpile staging area. In the unlikely event that it is necessary to temporarily stockpile soil onsite before loading, soil will be placed on Visqueen plastic sheeting and covered with plastic or be temporarily placed in a covered bin.
- **Controlling Migration** – Storm water controls will be implemented and monitoring will be conducted in an effort to minimize runoff of contaminated soil if it rains.
- **Monitoring** – If wind exceeds 25 mph, all work will cease until wind speeds fall below 25 mph. Air monitoring will be conducted to ensure dust remains at safe levels.
- **Traffic Control** – Traffic control using flagmen to direct truck traffic and flow on and off-site will be conducted.

### **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**

In accordance with CEQA, an Initial Study was prepared to evaluate potential environmental impacts that may result from implementation of the RAP activities. The Regional Board determined the proposed RAP activities would not result in significant impacts on the environment. Therefore, the Regional Board proposes a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

### **How to Submit Your Comments**

The Regional Board and DTSC want to know what you think of the draft Phase 1 RAP and CEQA Mitigated Negative Declaration. **The 30-day public comment period begins October 25<sup>th</sup>, and ends November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012. All public comments must be postmarked or e-mailed by November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012, and sent to:**

Teklewold Ayalew, Project Manager  
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board  
320 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200  
Los Angeles, CA 90013-1105  
E-mail: [tayalew@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:tayalew@waterboards.ca.gov)

You may also submit your public comments at the ***Open House and/or Community Meeting on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012***, at Enterprise Park Gymnasium. See the front page of this Fact Sheet for more information.

### **Where to Find Project Documents**

Copies of the draft Phase 1 RAP and related project documents are available for public review at the following Information Repositories:

#### **AC Bilbrew Library**

150 East El Segundo Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90061-2356  
(310) 538-3350 call for hours

#### **Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board**

320 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200  
Los Angeles, CA 90013-1105  
(213) 576-6600 by appointment or (213) 576-6717 fax request

#### **Dept. of Toxic Substances Control**

Regional Records Office  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, CA 90630-4732  
(714) 484-5337

Mon – Fri: 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Please contact Julie Johnson for an appointment

You may also view these documents electronically at [www.geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/search.asp](http://www.geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/search.asp).

### **Who to Contact at DTSC or the Regional Board for Information**

If you have any questions about the project, draft Phase 1 RAP, or other project related activities please contact the following DTSC or Regional Board staff:

#### **DTSC:**

Maryam Tasniff-Abbasi, Project Manager  
Dept. Toxic Substances Control  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, CA 90630-4732  
(714) 484-5489  
E-mail: [mtasnif@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:mtasnif@dtsc.ca.gov)

#### **Regional Board:**

Teklewold Ayalew, Project Manager  
Regional Water Quality Control Board  
320 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200  
Los Angeles, CA 90013-1105  
(213) 576-6739  
E-mail: [tayalew@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:tayalew@waterboards.ca.gov)

Stacey Lear, Public Participation Specialist  
Dept. Toxic Substances Control  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, CA 90630-4732  
(714) 484-5354  
E-mail: [slear@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:slear@dtsc.ca.gov)

### **Next Steps**

If the draft Phase 1 RAP is approved, shallow soil excavation activities are expected to take about 4-6 weeks to complete and the SVE system will be installed over the course of six (6) months and is expected to operate for about two (2) years. Sampling and soil vapor monitoring will be conducted to confirm that project goals have been met. Proposed activities do not pose a danger to those living near the site, park visitors or workers. Traffic detours, safety fencing and other precautionary measures will be taken in an effort to ensure the safety of Park users and workers. Sheriff Deputies will be onsite during installation activities and installation of the SVE system.

DTSC and the Regional Board will require a series of cleanup plans as necessary. You will have an opportunity to review and comment on these proposed plans as they become available in the future.

### **Demolition of former Ujima Village**

The Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles has begun demolition work at the former Ujima Village. Demolition activities are anticipated to have very minimal impact, if any, on Park use or its operations. Protective measures for noise, dust and abatement will be conducted, including monitoring. Demolition activities are scheduled to be completed within six (6) months.

### **Public Health Concerns**

The environmental investigation and proposed cleanup actions are under the regulatory authority of DTSC and the Regional Board. That being said, the environmental investigation itself and proposed cleanup do not completely address public health questions or concerns raised by the community. Therefore, three collaborative agencies will address the issue of health: DTSC will address present and future risks to human health related to the site investigation and cleanup. The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) is the agency that may consider the potential benefit to performing health studies of the community population. The Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health (LADPH) is available to address specific questions that you or your doctor may have about your

health as it relates to the environment, and to improve community access to healthcare. DTSC, the Regional Board, ATSDR, and LADPH will collaborate to address environmental and health issues of this site, and to communicate their findings to the community.

### **Public Safety of Earvin Magic Johnson Park**

The Park remains open to the public and is safe for public use. Sampling data collected and evaluated so far does not show a current health risk to Park patrons or offsite residents. Offsite investigation is currently in progress and additional soil vapor and air quality data are being collected to further evaluate any potential health risks. As you may know, the Regional Board requested the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) to evaluate the potential risk posed by consumption of fish from the Park lakes. Fish tissue samples taken in 2008 and 2009 showed the presence of polychlorobiphenyls (PCBs) and methylmercury. In June 2010, OEHHA issued a Health Advisory and Safe Eating Guideline that recommends limits on consumption for some fish species, which continues to remain in effect. As an added precaution, however, the County of Los Angeles continues to advise Park visitors not to consume fish from either of the Park's two lakes.

### **For Media Inquiries**

Ms. Charlotte Fadipe, Public Information Officer  
Dept. Toxic Substances Control  
P.O. Box 806  
Sacramento, CA 95812-0806  
(916) 323-3395  
E-mail: [cfadipe@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:cfadipe@dtsc.ca.gov)

*For more information about the former Athens Tank Farm site visit [www.EnviroStor.dtsc.ca.gov](http://www.EnviroStor.dtsc.ca.gov). For more information about DTSC, please visit our website at [www.dtsc.ca.gov](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov). ExxonMobil established a toll-free information line for project information. Please call 1-866-278-7207 to access additional information from ExxonMobil.*

### **Notice to Hearing Impaired Individuals**

TDD users can use the California Relay Service at 1-888-877-5378 to reach Ms. Stacey Lear, Public Participation Specialist at (714) 484-5354 or toll-free 1-866-495-5651.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Who is ordering the environmental investigation?**

The Regional Board has ordered responsible parties (ExxonMobil and the County of Los Angeles with respect to the Park and ExxonMobil and the Community Development Commission of the County of Los Angeles with respect to Ujima Village) to investigate and clean up the site. The Regional Board is responsible for reviewing, approving, and monitoring the investigation and cleanup of the site. DTSC provides assistance in oversight on the assessment of the potential health risk associated with the contamination, including indoor air sampling, and community outreach efforts.

### **What is the purpose of the upcoming cleanup activities (draft Phase 1 RAP)?**

In accordance with the California Environmental Protection Agency regulatory requirements, the Regional Board ordered ExxonMobil to develop a Remedial Action Plan to clean up the site. ExxonMobil prepared and submitted this draft Phase 1 RAP to the Regional Board for review and approval. Chemicals identified for remediation during RAP implementation are methane, total petroleum hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, also known as VOCs (which include hexane and benzene), lead and arsenic. Methane and VOCs will be addressed through Soil Vapor Extraction (SVE) technology, while lead and arsenic will be addressed by soil excavation (removal) activities.

### **Who is conducting and monitoring the cleanup?**

ExxonMobil, the County of Los Angeles and the Community Development Commission of the County of Los Angeles have been ordered by the Regional Board to conduct the investigation and cleanup. The draft Phase 1 RAP, if approved, will be performed under the direction of the Regional Board, with support from DTSC. The Regional Board and DTSC are part of the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA).

### **Why is the SVE and Excavation taking place?**

SVE and excavation of impacted soil are identified as part of the site cleanup plan to mitigate the potential threat to human health from potential vapor intrusion and direct exposure to impacted soil beneath the site.

### **When will cleanup activities begin and how long will it take?**

Cleanup activities will begin after the Phase 1 RAP is approved. The Phase 1 SVE installation will take about six (6) months and operations are estimated to take about two (2) years.

### **How can the public find out about the SVE and Excavation results?**

ExxonMobil will prepare periodic reports for the operation of the SVE system and a Soil Excavation Report, and will provide these reports to the Regional Board and DTSC for review. These reports will be available for public review (see Public Participation, Resources and Contact Information).

### **Will there be security onsite at the SVE and Excavation locations?**

Yes. As has been the case with previous activities in this environmental investigation, Sheriff Deputies will be onsite while work crews are installing the SVE system, during operation and maintenance visits, and during the excavation work.

### **Does this activity pose a danger to people living near the work locations?**

Proposed activities do not pose a danger to those living near the site, Park visitors or workers. Traffic detours, safety fencing and other precautionary measures will be taken to ensure the safety of park users and work crews.

**Is there anything I should do while the remediation work is performed?**

Residents and Park visitors are asked to avoid fenced off areas. Please follow any guidelines and safety precautions provided by the Regional Board and DTSC in park signs or work notices near work areas.

**Wasn't Ujima Village closed because of this environmental investigation?**

No. Ujima Village was not closed because of a health risk to the former Ujima Village residents. There is no evidence to date of a health risk related to soil and groundwater conditions at the site. To the contrary, extensive evaluation of shallow soil and indoor and outdoor air quality samples of the Ujima properties determined that the total cancer risk and non-cancer hazard for exposure to contaminants in shallow soils were within California and US EPA regulatory limits. Ujima Village was closed for a variety of factors, including reduced tenancy, the deteriorating condition of the vacant units of the apartment complex, the high cost to make necessary renovations to those vacant units, and the anticipated disruption to the residents' lives that would have resulted during long-term environmental investigation and remediation.

**What about Honey's Little Angels Daycare?**

Although there is no evidence of an immediate health concern, out of an abundance of caution, the Honey's Little Angels Daycare was relocated in late July 2012. During demolition of the former Ujima Village, the adjacent vacated daycare property is fenced restricting public access.

**Who do I contact for questions/concerns about health risk from potential past exposures?**

Concerns have been raised about whether prior conditions at the site may have caused illnesses in former residents of Ujima Village and members of the surrounding community. There is no evidence to date of a health risk related to soil and groundwater conditions related to the site. To the contrary, extensive evaluation of shallow soil and indoor and outdoor air quality samples of the Ujima properties determined that the total cancer risk and non-cancer hazard for exposure to contaminants in shallow soils were within California and US EPA regulatory limits. While site data can be utilized today to estimate *current and future health risks*, current science does not allow a determination as to whether prior site conditions may have caused illness. For residents with limited access to healthcare, the County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Health, is engaged in efforts to assist the community in gaining access to healthcare. Residents may contact 211 for more information on how to get access to healthcare.

Former residents of Ujima Village and current residents in nearby communities with health concerns are encouraged to seek the advice of their physicians. *Your physician may also contact Cyrus Rangan, M.D., County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Health, (213) 738-3220, E-mail: [crangan@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:crangan@ph.lacounty.gov), for inquiries or questions concerning toxic exposures in the Los Angeles County environment and your health.*

**What is the difference between a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) and an epidemiological study?**

As previously mentioned, the HRA is a scientific tool used to predict the likelihood that chemicals on the site could be harmful to people or the environment. The HRA evaluates potential (current and future) adverse human health effects that could result from hazardous releases from the site and whether current or future chemical exposures will pose risks to a community. The term HRA is often misinterpreted. This is because many people believe a HRA will tell them whether a current health problem or health symptom is caused by exposure to a specific chemical. This is not the case. Scientists who search for links between chemical exposures and health problems in a community may conduct what is known as epidemiological study. These studies may include a survey of health problems in a community, assessment of available human data, and a comparison of health problems in that community with those in others or communities.



**Draft Phase 1 Remedial Action Plan (RAP) and Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration  
Former Athens Tank Farm (Former Ujima Village & Earvin Magic Johnson Regional Park) Site  
Willowbrook Area of Los Angeles, California**

**Reminder: All public comments on the draft Phase 1 RAP and/or CEQA Mitigated Negative Declaration must be postmarked or e-mailed by November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012.**

\_\_\_\_\_ Please add to the site mailing list.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Please delete from the site mailing list.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

*DTSC and Regional Board mailings are solely for the purpose of keeping persons informed of DTSC and Regional Board activities. Mailing lists are not routinely released to outside parties. However, they are considered public records and, if requested, may be subject to release.*



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**Stacey Lear, Public Participation Specialist**

Department of Toxic Substances Control

5796 Corporate Avenue

Cypress, CA 90630-4732

***Inside: Information on the former Athens Tank Farm Site***

*For more information about the DTSC, please visit our web site at [www.dtsc.ca.gov](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov)*