



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Department of Toxic Substances Control

PRESS RELEASE

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Fires Prompt DTSC to Order Facility To Cease Hazardous Waste Consolidation Operations

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has ordered a hazardous waste facility operator in Rancho Cordova to immediately cease consolidating hazardous waste after two fires and an explosion occurred during consolidation operations in the last two years.

The order prohibits General Environmental Management (GEM) LLC, dba PSC Environmental Services, LLC, from consolidating hazardous waste at its 11855 White Rock Road facility in Rancho Cordova until new procedures and training are put into place. The facility accepts containerized hazardous waste, consolidates it into fewer containers, and ships the consolidated hazardous waste to other hazardous waste facilities for disposal.

“In spite of past assurances from the facility that it has the practices and procedures in place to prevent these kinds of incidents, the third event has led DTSC to compel the facility to cease operations until such time they can demonstrate it can be operated in a safe manner,” said Brian Johnson, Deputy Director of Hazardous Waste Management Program.

Consolidation activities will be prohibited until DTSC is satisfied that new procedures for identifying and mixing incompatible wastes and related staff training are in place to prevent fires, explosions and other accidents that could potentially release hazardous waste to the environment.

Issuance of the order does not prevent DTSC from taking further enforcement actions for the violations of its hazardous waste requirements

related to the fires or explosion.

In its Imminent and Substantial Endangerment Order, DTSC cited three consolidation incidents. The most recent was March 3, 2013, when a passerby spotted flames coming from a bin that contained consolidated hazardous waste solids and trash and called the fire department. Firefighters responded and extinguished the blaze. Security camera footage revealed the fire had been smoldering for about five hours. GEM deemed a chemical reaction from mixing incompatible wastes on February 28 to be the likely cause of the fire.

In 2010, DTSC fined GEM \$600,000 for violations that included storing acids, solvents and other toxic waste outside the facility and exceeding its waste quantity limit; storing waste in unauthorized areas; and not taking proper precautions such as a required secondary containment.

To see the Imminent and Substantial Endangerment Determination and Enforcement Order, [click here](#).

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FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES: Contact the Department of Toxic Substances Control by phone at (800) 728-6942 or visit www.dtsc.ca.gov. To report illegal handling, discharge, or disposal of hazardous waste, call the Waste Alert Hotline at (800) 698-6942.

The Mission of DTSC is to protect California's people and environment from harmful effects of toxic substances by restoring contaminated properties, identifying and promoting safer ingredients in consumer products, and ensuring stewardship through enforcement, regulation and pollution prevention.