

Community Update

DTSC is overseeing the investigation and cleanup related to:

- **Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)**
 - **Trichloroethylene (TCE)**

The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is providing this update to inform community members about environmental investigation activities at the Market Creek Plaza shopping center, located at 310-312 Euclid Avenue, San Diego, California 92214 (Site).

Background

The Site was previously occupied by the Langley Fleet Aerospace Facility (Langley Facility) from the 1950s through the 1990s. During onsite operations at the Langley Facility, chemicals such as TCE may have been released into the ground. Market Creek Plaza, LLC (Property Owner), currently owns the commercial shopping center, which includes the Food 4 Less grocery store where the Langley Facility used to operate.

On June 20 and 21, 2024, indoor air samples were collected inside the Food 4 Less grocery store. The results confirmed levels of TCE at concentrations above regulatory standards.

On July 2, 2024, DTSC met with the Property Owner to request immediate implementation of temporary steps to reduce indoor air contamination at the Food 4 Less grocery store until a longer-term remedy is determined to protect the public from exposure to TCE.

On July 3, 2024, DTSC issued a Proposition 65 Notice to inform the San Diego County Department of Environmental Health and Quality and the San Diego County Board of Supervisors about the risk of chemical exposure at the Site.

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About us

DTSC protects California's people, communities, and environment from toxic substances. We restore contaminated land and compel manufacturers to make safer consumer products.

Reasons for the cleanup

There are VOCs (TCE) in soil vapor under the Food 4 Less grocery store.

- TCE was historically used as a metal degreaser and can also be found in products like automotive degreasers, stain removers, paint removers, and adhesives
- TCE in soil vapor can enter buildings through cracks in the ground, potentially affecting indoor air quality in a process called vapor intrusion

Previous Site activities

Between July and August 2024, the Property Owner completed the following activities inside the Food 4 Less grocery store:

- Installed air treatment units
- Upgraded the heating/air conditioning/ventilation (HVAC) system
- Added a new carbon filter to the HVAC system
- Sealed cracks and openings in the foundation where TCE vapors may have entered the grocery store

In July and August 2024, another round of indoor air samples were collected at the Food 4 Less grocery store to test the effectiveness of the temporary remedies implemented to reduce TCE levels.

On August 8, 2024, additional indoor air samples were collected at the Food 4 Less grocery store:

- **Results confirmed that TCE had been reduced significantly.**
Reductions ranged from approximately

45% to 95%, but remained elevated at three (3) of the fifteen (15) sampling locations

On October 16, 2024, indoor air was retested to continue evaluating the effectiveness of the temporary remedies in reducing TCE levels at the Food 4 Less grocery store:

- **Results showed TCE was reduced by 43% to 88%** in some areas, but **increased up to 145%** in others. In September 2024, a system damper was installed in the HVAC, which may have limited the flow of fresh air, leading to an increase in TCE.

On October 29, 2024, the HVAC system in the Food 4 Less grocery store was adjusted to improve airflow.

In January 2025, indoor air at the Food 4 Less grocery store was tested to check TCE levels.

- **Results showed TCE was reduced** throughout the entire Food 4 Less grocery store **by an average of 40%**, but elevated levels of TCE were still present at six (6) of the fifteen (15) sampling locations

Measures to protect the community

In late August and early September 2024, DTSC required the Property Owner to take additional action at the Food 4 Less grocery store to continue reducing TCE levels in indoor air:

- HVAC improvements to increase the flow of fresh air
- Relocating air treatment units closer to

the three (3) sampling locations with elevated TCE levels in indoor air

- Installation of ten (10) additional air treatment units, bringing the total number of operational units to fifty (50)

To better understand the extent of TCE contamination at the Site and to create a long-term cleanup plan to address TCE in soil vapor, the Property Owner was/is required to complete the following activities:

- December 2024: Conducted a Site-wide soil and soil vapor assessment to check for TCE contamination across the Site and to check if indoor air quality in other buildings or neighboring properties may be affected
- January/February 2025: Prepared a Sub Slab Depressurization System (SSDS) Pilot Study Workplan to assess the effectiveness of SSDS as a long-term cleanup plan to address the TCE contamination at the Site

Next steps at the Food 4 Less grocery store:

- Indoor air testing at the Food 4 Less grocery store is being conducted quarterly beginning in January 2025

Learn more about the project

For more information regarding how TCE was found at the Site and its potential health effects, please refer to prior DTSC Community Updates, and the United States Center for Disease Control (CDC) Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) website:

1. **DTSC project documents:**
tinyurl.com/Fleet-Aerospace

2. **CDC's ATSDR website:**
<https://wwwn.cdc.gov/TSP/substances/ToxSubstance.aspx?toxid=30>



What happens next?

Next steps at the Site:

- The Sitewide soil and soil vapor assessment report (sampling conducted in December 2024) is due back to DTSC in Spring 2025
- Results will be compiled and presented in a Community Update
- The indoor air at the Site's northern buildings will be evaluated in Spring 2025