

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL COAST REGION

STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 15-17, 2019
Prepared on April 12, 2019

ITEM NUMBER: 19

SUBJECT: Executive Officer's Report to the Board

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This item presents a brief discussion of issues that may interest the Board. Upon request, staff can provide more detailed information about any item.

UPDATE ON BUCKLEY ROAD TRICHLOROETHYLENE GROUNDWATER INVESTIGATION
[Dean Thomas (805) 549-3690]

Background: Trichloroethylene (TCE) is present in private and industrial water supply wells near Buckley Road, adjacent to the San Luis Obispo County airport. *Currently, 12 of 68 wells tested have concentrations above the drinking water standard (maximum contaminant level or MCL). The highest concentration of TCE in a private domestic well is 59 micrograms per liter. This concentration is approximately 12 times greater than the MCL of 5 micrograms per liter.* Based on the distribution of TCE concentrations in wells, the primary focus area with TCE concentrations near or above the drinking water standard includes the area surrounded by: Thread Lane (also known as Noll Road), Buckley Road, Davenport Creek Road, and Evans Road, and includes Angie Lou Lane, Mello Lane, and Three Sisters Road. A map and other information are available on the Buckley Road area TCE Investigation webpage at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/hot_topics/tce_pce_info/tce_pce_index.html

Communication and Outreach:

Central Coast Water Board staff provides updates to the public and the Board as newer and more detailed information becomes available on both the source area investigation and changing well water quality conditions. Staff continues outreach efforts to residents and businesses in the Buckley Road area and updates the Buckley Road TCE Investigation-specific webpage as new information becomes available. Ongoing outreach includes email server list notifications when webpage updates occur and answering phone calls from the community. *Staff most recently distributed a public notice on January 25, 2019 to inform the community of the investigation results at 4665 Thread Lane.*

Well Sampling: *Central Coast Water Board staff last sampled several domestic and industrial wells in October 2018. At that time, TCE concentrations fluctuated slightly up and down in most wells with a general overall decrease in TCE concentrations compared with historic results.*

Source Identification: In 2016, the Central Coast Water Board required San Luis Obispo County to conduct soil gas and groundwater investigations on its regional airport property to investigate potential sources of TCE associated with industrial operations and old dump sites at the airport. The County completed their fieldwork investigation in September 2016. The results of the County's soil gas and groundwater investigation indicated there is no evidence of a TCE

source present on the airport property contributing to the Buckley Road Area TCE plume. Given the results from the County's soil gas and groundwater investigations, the next step was to conduct additional investigations and delineation of TCE in the industrial area overlying the highest concentrations of TCE along Thread Lane. Investigations at 825 Buckley Road and 795 Buckley Road were completed and investigation reports were submitted by mid-2017. Based on the results reviewed for the two investigations, a TCE source remained undiscovered and an investigation at 4665 Thread Lane was still required. The property owner for 4665 Thread Lane claimed financial hardship and applied for a grant from the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) to assist with funding the investigation costs. Central Coast Water Board staff worked with the property owner and State Water Board grant personnel to secure funding, which resulted in investigation work being implemented from August through December 2018.

Results from the soil and soil gas investigation at 4665 Thread Lane did not indicate a clear identification of the source of the TCE. However, TCE was detected at elevated concentrations in deep groundwater beneath the property at a concentration of 783 micrograms per liter. This TCE concentration is approximately 157 times greater than the drinking water standard.

TCE detections in the Buckley Road area form a 1/2-mile-long by 1/3-mile wide plume extending from approximately Thread Lane to Davenport Creek Road. The 4665 Thread Lane property is located above the highest concentrations of TCE detected in the Buckley Road area. The investigation results indicate that the release or source of TCE in the Buckley Road area originated from 4665 Thread Lane. Maps showing the distribution of TCE in the vicinity of Buckley Road and Thread Lane were prepared by Central Coast Water Board staff and are available on GeoTracker:

<https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/?surl=jfi7e>

Next Steps: *Central Coast Water Board staff are preparing a cleanup and abatement order that will be sent out for public comment in approximately a month. Staff also plans to host a public meeting during the public comment period for the cleanup and abatement order. The cleanup and abatement order will require replacement water for properties associated with wells having TCE groundwater concentrations that exceed MCLs in the Buckley Road area and to complete additional investigation and remediation of the TCE impacts to prevent further releases from the source area into groundwater that is affecting wells in the Buckley Road area.*

Central Coast Water Board staff will continue to provide updates to the Board on this project via the EO report.

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Attachments

1. Table 1 - 401 Water Quality Certification Applications Received
2. Table 2 - 401 Water Quality Certifications Issued
3. Table 3 - Groundwater Section, Case Closure Performance Scoreboard
4. Table 4 - Groundwater Case Closures
5. Table 5 - Enrollments In General Orders/Waivers