



Enforcement News

Consultants fined, disqualified for submitting inflated invoices to state's Underground Tank Cleanup Fund

Companies also accused of accepting kickbacks from Cal Tech Labs

Nov. 7, 2022

Contact: [Ailene Voisin](#), Information Officer

SACRAMENTO – Two environmental consulting firms, accused of conspiring with a laboratory to falsify invoices submitted to the State Water Resources Control Board's [Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund](#) for reimbursement, have been [fined and disqualified](#) from future assistance programs.

AdvancedGeo Inc., a Stockton-based company, paid a \$230,000 penalty. Associated Soils Analysis Inc., located in Tulare, will pay \$86,651.

In both instances, the State Water Board's [Fraud, Waste and Abuse Prevention Unit](#) uncovered schemes to inflate reimbursement requests from the cleanup fund in return for hidden kickback payments from Cal Tech Laboratories Inc. and its owner, Roobik Yaghoubi.

Following the board's coordination with law enforcement, Yaghoubi was prosecuted criminally in Los Angeles County, where he received a suspended sentence of 16 months and three years of probation. He also was ordered to perform 30 days of community service and pay \$190,000 in restitution, including \$70,000 seized from his home. Additionally, he pled guilty to a false data charge.

In the AdvancedGeo Inc. investigation, staff uncovered inflated invoices for laboratory costs that were submitted to the UST Cleanup Fund. The Associated Soils Inc. inquiry revealed excessive subcontractor costs, billing rates, hours and miles, along with ineligible markup.

"Deceptive billing practices deprive Californians of the full benefit of their investments in programs that protect public health and the environment," said Yvonne West, director of the board's enforcement unit. "We take protecting the state's funds and its waters seriously and will hold anyone accountable who misrepresents themselves to fraudulently obtain state money."

Since launching an enforcement initiative in 2011 to deter, investigate and prosecute fraud against the cleanup fund, which was made permanent in 2013, the board has



disqualified 11 businesses and 16 individuals from participating in the cleanup program, in addition to administering penalties and initiating civil and criminal prosecutions.

In 2021, the Legislature expanded the board's authority to investigate and penalize fraud related to all its financial assistance programs. Fraud cases also can be prosecuted criminally or civilly with assistance from the Attorney General's Office and other agencies.

For more information on efforts to prevent, investigate and prosecute cases of fraud, waste and/or abuse, see the [fraud prevention fact sheet](#). An online [list of businesses and individuals](#) barred from working for the state of California also can be found on the website.

The public can report suspected fraud, waste and/or abuse by email at ReportFraud@waterboards.ca.gov, via the toll-free message line ([1-855-263-0863](tel:1-855-263-0863)), or by mailing or faxing a [Fraud Reporting Complaint Form](#) to:

State Water Board
Office of Enforcement
P. O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812
Fax: 916-341-5896

The State Water Board's mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper allocation and efficient use for present and future generations.