

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
COLORADO RIVER BASIN REGION

CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT ORDER NO. 90-045
AGAINST
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
El Centro - Imperial County

The Executive Officer of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Colorado River Basin Region, finds that:

1. The United States Department of the Navy, (hereinafter referred to as the discharger), owns and operates the Naval Air Facility located in El Centro, CA.
2. The Naval Air Facility fuel farm was inspected on June 22, 1987, by a representative of the Imperial County Planning and Building Department, and said inspection was documented in an inspection memo of the same date to the Regional Board. Navy personnel showed the inspector 14 inch deep borings that exposed apparently contaminated soil and from which several hundred gallons of diesel fuel had been removed and placed back into underground storage tanks at the subject facility. The Imperial County Planning Department had received no record of this procedure. Additionally, the inspector was shown a 42,000 gallon fuel tank under repair (Tank 606). Navy personnel indicated that approximately 25 holes in the tank had been repaired over the years, and that the tank was installed, along with the rest of the underground tanks at the tank farm, approximately 30 years ago. The inspector stated in his memo that several of the other underground storage tanks at the fuel farm had 42,000 gallon capacities, and two of them had a capacity of 567,000 gallons. He also stated that the procedure used for testing these tanks is not in compliance with State of California regulations.
2. The Regional Board received an Underground Storage Tank Unauthorized Release Report on July 13, 1987, indicating that diesel fuel had leaked from a 42,000 gallon underground storage tank at the subject facility, resulting in soil and ground water contamination.
3. Regional Board staff has determined that the diesel fuel contamination presents a threat to the quality of the ground water.
4. By letter dated July 31, 1987, the discharger was requested to conduct a remedial investigation of the contamination and submit a technical report containing the results to this office by September 30, 1987.
5. By letters dated August 19, 1988, and January 31, 1990, the Regional Board granted the discharger time extensions for submittal of the required technical report.
6. By letter dated October 11, 1988, the discharger reported to the Regional Board that 23,000 gallons of fuel had been pumped from two open pits at the subject facility. There was no documentation of this activity to accompany said letter, nor was there any indication of where these pits are located.

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7. By letter dated January 19, 1989, the Regional Board requested the discharger to submit by March 1, 1989, the Final General Workplan (GWP) which details the remedial activities necessary to mitigate diesel contamination at the subject site. Said document was submitted to the Regional Board on April 11, 1989.
8. By letter to M.Z.P. Inc., dated April 11, 1989, an electrical contractor hired to install a security fence at the fuel farm complained about extremely unsafe conditions at the worksite. Said contractor was concerned about fuel and fumes present in manholes, and indicated that the local fire department considered the concentration of fumes too high to sustain life in that environment.
9. By letter dated September 1, 1989, the Imperial County Planning Department advised the discharger to have all of its active tanks brought under permit compliance within 30 days of the date of said letter. It was also stated in the letter that the Imperial County Planning Department had been waiting four years for the discharger to obtain permits for the subject facility under the guidelines of the State of California Underground Storage Tank Requirements.
10. The discharger has caused or permitted the discharge of waste or wastewater into the waters of the State and created a condition of pollution.
11. Section 13304 of the California Water Code states, in part, that:

"Any person...who has caused or permitted...any waste to be discharged or deposited where it is, or probably will be, discharged into the waters of the State and creates, or threatens to create, a condition of pollution or nuisance, shall upon order of the regional board cleanup such waste or abate the effects thereof, or, in the case of threatened pollution or nuisance, take other necessary remedial action."
12. The Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region of California designates the beneficial uses of ground and surface waters in this Region.
13. The beneficial uses of ground waters in the Imperial Hydrologic Unit are:
 - a. Municipal supply (MUN)
 - b. Industrial supply (IND)

Within the Imperial Valley area of the Imperial Hydrologic Unit, much of the ground water is too saline for municipal use. The existing municipal use in this area is practically inconsequential.
14. To determine whether the ground water at this site in question is considered "MUN beneficial use", refer to Section IV of Chapter 3 of the "Sources of Drinking Water Policy" which was adopted by the Regional Board on March 22, 1989 (Order No. 89-026) and approved by the State Board on August 17, 1989 (SWRCB Resolution No. 89-075).
15. This enforcement action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Section 15308 and 15321, Chapter 3, Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, that pursuant to Section 13304 of Division 7 of the California Water Code, the discharger shall comply with the following:

1. Submit to the Regional Board by February 1, 1991 a technical report containing the results of a complete subsurface investigation, as requested by the Regional Board by letter dated January 31, 1989.
2. Within two weeks of submittal of the technical report, described in No. 1, above, submit a cleanup proposal including the recovery of the free product in and above the ground water, and extraction of the contaminated ground water.
3. Cleanup and abate the effects of the discharge of diesel fuel, pursuant to the cleanup proposal described in No. 2, above.

Ordered By: Philip A. Gruenberg
Executive Officer

10-31-90
Date