

Senate Bill No. 665

CHAPTER 328

An act to amend Sections 25281, 25299.10, 25299.13, 25299.23.1, 25299.24, 25299.37, 25299.39, 25299.39.1, 25299.39.2, 25299.51, 25299.52, 25299.53, 25299.54, 25299.57, and 25299.59 of, to add Sections 25299.11.5, 25299.62, and 25299.63 to, to repeal Section 25299.38 of, and to repeal and add Section 25299.56 of, the Health and Safety Code, relating to underground storage tanks.

[Approved by Governor September 3, 1999. Filed
with Secretary of State September 3, 1999.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 665, Sher. Underground storage tanks.

(1) Existing law generally regulates the storage of hazardous substances in underground storage tanks and requires underground storage tanks that are used to store hazardous substances and are installed after January 1, 1984, to meet certain requirements concerning secondary containment. Existing law defines the terms "hazardous substance" and "person" for purposes of these provisions.

This bill would make technical revisions to those definitions.

(2) Under the existing Barry Keene Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Trust Fund Act of 1989, owners and operators of petroleum underground storage tanks are required to establish and maintain evidence of financial responsibility for taking corrective action and compensating 3rd parties for bodily injury and property damage arising from operating an underground storage tank. Existing law requires every owner of an underground storage tank to pay a storage fee for each gallon of petroleum placed in the tank. The fees are required to be deposited in the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund. The money in the fund may be expended by the State Water Resources Control Board, upon appropriation by the Legislature, for various purposes, including payment of a California regional water quality control board's or local agency's corrective action costs, and the payment of claims to aid owners and operators of petroleum underground storage tanks who take corrective action to clean up unauthorized releases from those tanks. Existing law provides that the fund may sue and be sued in its own name.

This bill would make a statement of legislative intent regarding the construction of the act. The bill would revise the definition of the terms "claim," "site," and "tank" for purposes of the act and would define the term "adjudicative proceeding" for purposes of the act. The bill would delete the authorization for the fund to sue and be sued in its own name.

(3) Existing law requires the board to pay a claim for regulatory technical assistance to a property owner or operator who meets specified requirements and who is otherwise eligible for reimbursement.

This bill would revise that requirement by limiting the amount of such a claim to \$3,000 per occurrence to an eligible owner or operator and would provide that technical assistance only includes assistance in the preparation and submission of a claim, as specified.

(4) Existing law requires the board to determine an applicant's eligibility for a claim for corrective action costs and to notify the applicant of this determination within 60 days of the receipt of the claim application, and if a claimant requests a review of that determination, the board is required to render a decision within 30 days. The board is required to issue all decisions on a claim for corrective action costs and third-party costs within 90 days after submission.

This bill would revise the procedures for making determinations on claims for corrective action costs and third-party compensation costs, and would specify procedures for filing a petition for review, with regard to an unpaid claim. The bill would specify the standard for judicial review of a final decision by the board, and would provide for related matters. The bill would specify procedures for the review of a work plan for corrective action and the preapproval of corrective action costs, based upon specified factors.

(5) Existing law specifies the conditions under which a corrective action site may be closed, specifies a uniform closure letter, and authorizes the board to require closure of a tank case under the jurisdiction of a regional board or local agency that is implementing the local oversight program. Existing law authorizes the board to suspend corrective action or investigation work at a site that is not an emergency site, except for specified activities.

This bill would authorize the board to recommend closure of a tank case that is under the jurisdiction of a local agency that is not implementing the local oversight program, would specify procedures for the review of the board's decision to require closure, and would revise the contents of the uniform closure letter. This bill would impose a state-mandated local program by imposing new duties upon the local agencies that implement the act.

The bill would instead prohibit the board from suspending specified activities at a site, would revise the definition of emergency site for purposes of such a suspension, and would require the board to adopt regulations with regard to specifying the conditions for an emergency site. The bill would prohibit the board from suspending a corrective action or investigation until the effective date of those regulations.

The bill would prohibit the board from reimbursing a claimant for any eligible cost for which the claimant has been, or will be,



compensated by another party, except as specified, and would make a statement of legislative intent that this prohibition is declaratory of existing law.

(6) Existing law requires the board to develop a system for storing and retrieving data regarding petroleum discharge from underground storage tanks. The board is required to remove a site from the data base when no residual contamination remains.

This bill would instead require the board to designate a site included in the data system as having no residual contamination if the board makes a specified determination. The bill would also define the term “residual contamination” for purposes of the designation of a site in that data base.

(7) The bill would correct obsolete references and delete obsolete provisions.

(8) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 25281 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

25281. For purposes of this chapter, the following definitions apply:

(a) “Automatic line leak detector” means any method of leak detection, as determined in regulations adopted by the board, which alerts the owner or operator of an underground storage tank to the presence of a leak. “Automatic line leak detector” includes, but is not limited to, any device or mechanism which alerts the owner or operator of an underground storage tank to the presence of a leak by restricting or shutting off the flow of a hazardous substance through piping, or by triggering an audible or visual alarm, and which detects leaks of three gallons or more per hour at 10 pounds per square inch line pressure within one hour.

(b) “Board” means the State Water Resources Control Board. “Regional board” means a California regional water quality control board.

(c) (1) “Certified Unified Program Agency” or “CUPA” means the agency certified by the Secretary for Environmental Protection to implement the unified program specified in Chapter 6.11 (commencing with Section 25404) within a jurisdiction.

(2) “Participating Agency” or “PA” means an agency which has a written agreement with the CUPA pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 25404.3, and is approved by the secretary to implement or



enforce the unified program element specified in paragraph (3) of subdivision (c) of Section 25404, in accordance with Sections 25404.1 and 25404.2.

(3) “Unified Program Agency” or “UPA” means the CUPA, or its participating agencies to the extent each PA has been designated by the CUPA, pursuant to a written agreement, to implement or enforce the unified program element specified in paragraph (3) of subdivision (c) of Section 25404. For purposes of this chapter, the UPAs have the responsibility and authority, to the extent provided by this chapter and Sections 25404.1 and 25404.2, to implement and enforce only those requirements of this chapter listed in paragraph (3) of subdivision (c) of Section 25404. The UPAs also have the responsibility and authority, to the extent provided by this chapter and Sections 25404.1 and 25404.2, to implement and enforce the regulations adopted to implement the requirements of this chapter listed in paragraph (3) of subdivision (c) of Section 25404. After a CUPA has been certified by the secretary, the unified program agencies shall be the only local agencies authorized to enforce the requirements of this chapter listed in paragraph (3) of subdivision (c) of Section 25404 within the jurisdiction of the CUPA. This paragraph shall not be construed to limit the authority or responsibility granted to the board and the regional boards by this chapter to implement and enforce this chapter and the regulations adopted pursuant thereto.

(d) “Department” means the Department of Toxic Substances Control.

(e) “Facility” means any one, or combination of, underground storage tanks used by a single business entity at a single location or site.

(f) “Federal act” means Subchapter IX (commencing with Section 6991) of Chapter 82 of Title 42 of the United States Code, as added by the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984 (P.L. 98-616), or as it may subsequently be amended or supplemented.

(g) “Hazardous substance” means either of the following:

(1) All of the following liquid and solid substances, unless the department, in consultation with the board, determines that the substance could not adversely affect the quality of the waters of the state:

(A) Substances on the list prepared by the Director of Industrial Relations pursuant to Section 6382 of the Labor Code.

(B) Hazardous substances, as defined in Section 25316.

(C) Any substance or material which is classified by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) as a flammable liquid, a class II combustible liquid, or a class III-A combustible liquid.

(2) Any regulated substance, as defined in subsection (2) of Section 6991 of Title 42 of the United States Code, as that section reads



on January 1, 1989, or as it may subsequently be amended or supplemented.

(h) “Local agency” means the local agency authorized, pursuant to Section 25283, to implement this chapter.

(i) “Operator” means any person in control of, or having daily responsibility for, the daily operation of an underground storage tank system.

(j) “Owner” means the owner of an underground storage tank.

(k) “Person” means an individual, trust, firm, joint stock company, corporation, including a government corporation, partnership, limited liability company, or association. “Person” also includes any city, county, district, the state, another state of the United States, any department or agency of this state or another state, or the United States to the extent authorized by federal law.

(l) “Pipe” means any pipeline or system of pipelines which is used in connection with the storage of hazardous substances and which is not intended to transport hazardous substances in interstate or intrastate commerce or to transfer hazardous materials in bulk to or from a marine vessel.

(m) “Primary containment” means the first level of containment, such as the portion of a tank which comes into immediate contact on its inner surface with the hazardous substance being contained.

(n) “Product tight” means impervious to the substance which is contained, or is to be contained, so as to prevent the seepage of the substance from the primary containment. To be product tight, the tank shall not be subject to physical or chemical deterioration by the substance which it contains over the useful life of the tank.

(o) “Release” means any spilling, leaking, emitting, discharging, escaping, leaching, or disposing from an underground storage tank into or on the waters of the state, the land, or the subsurface soils.

(p) “Secondary containment” means the level of containment external to, and separate from, the primary containment.

(q) “Single walled” means construction with walls made of only one thickness of material. For the purposes of this chapter, laminated, coated, or clad materials are considered single walled.

(r) “Special inspector” means a professional engineer, registered pursuant to Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 6700) of Division 3 of the Business and Professions Code, who is qualified to attest, at a minimum, to structural soundness, seismic safety, the compatibility of construction materials with contents, cathodic protection, and the mechanical compatibility of the structural elements of underground storage tanks.

(s) “Storage” or “store” means the containment, handling, or treatment of hazardous substances, either on a temporary basis or for a period of years. “Storage” or “store” does not mean the storage of hazardous wastes in an underground storage tank if the person operating the tank has been issued a hazardous waste facilities permit



by the department pursuant to Section 25200 or granted interim status under Section 25200.5.

(t) “Tank” means a stationary device designed to contain an accumulation of hazardous substances which is constructed primarily of nonearthen materials (e.g. wood, concrete, steel, plastic) which provides structural support.

(u) “Tank integrity test” means a test method capable of detecting an unauthorized release from an underground storage tank consistent with the minimum standards adopted by the board.

(v) “Tank tester” means an individual who performs tank integrity tests on underground storage tanks.

(w) “Unauthorized release” means any release of any hazardous substance which does not conform to this chapter, including, but not limited to, an unauthorized release specified in Section 25295.5, unless this release is authorized by the board or a regional board pursuant to Division 7 (commencing with Section 13000) of the Water Code.

(x) (1) “Underground storage tank” means any one or combination of tanks, including pipes connected thereto, which is used for the storage of hazardous substances and which is substantially or totally beneath the surface of the ground. “Underground storage tank” does not include any of the following:

(A) A tank with a capacity of 1,100 gallons or less which is located on a farm and which stores motor vehicle fuel used primarily for agricultural purposes and not for resale.

(B) A tank which is located on a farm or at the residence of a person, which has a capacity of 1,100 gallons or less, and which stores home heating oil for consumptive use on the premises where stored.

(C) Structures, such as sumps, separators, storm drains, catch basins, oil field gathering lines, refinery pipelines, lagoons, evaporation ponds, well cellars, separation sumps, lined and unlined pits, sumps and lagoons. Sumps which are a part of a monitoring system required under Section 25291 or 25292 and sumps or other structures defined as underground storage tanks under the federal act are not exempted by this subparagraph.

(D) A tank holding hydraulic fluid for a closed loop mechanical system that uses compressed air or hydraulic fluid to operate lifts, elevators, and other similar devices.

(2) Structures identified in subparagraphs (C) and (D) of paragraph (1) may be regulated by the board and any regional board pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Division 7 (commencing with Section 13000) of the Water Code) to ensure that they do not pose a threat to water quality.

(y) “Underground tank system” or “tank system” means an underground storage tank, connected piping, ancillary equipment, and containment system, if any.



(z) (1) “Unified program facility” means all contiguous land and structures, other appurtenances, and improvements on the land which are subject to the requirements of paragraph (3) of subdivision (c) of Section 25404.

(2) “Unified program facility permit” means a permit issued pursuant to Chapter 6.11 (commencing with Section 25404), and which encompasses the permitting requirements of Section 25284.

(3) “Permit” means a permit issued pursuant to Section 25284 or a unified program facility permit as defined in paragraph (2).

SEC. 2. Section 25299.10 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

25299.10. (a) This chapter shall be known, and may be cited, as the Barry Keene Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Trust Fund Act of 1989.

(b) The Legislature hereby finds and declares all of the following:

(1) In order to help ensure an efficient petroleum underground storage tank cleanup program that adequately protects public health and safety and the environment and provides for the rapid distribution of cleanup funds that will assist the state’s recovery, it is in the best interest of the public that the board devote maximum effort to the expedited processing and payment of all claims filed pursuant to Sections 25299.57 and 25299.58.

(2) It is estimated that approximately 90 percent of the underground storage tanks in the state contain petroleum and the remaining 10 percent of the tanks contain various chemical constituents.

(3) Although the exact extent of the problem is unknown, it is thought that a significant number of the underground storage tanks containing petroleum in the state may be leaking.

(4) In recent years, owners or operators of underground storage tanks have been unable to obtain affordable environmental impairment liability insurance coverage to pay for corrective action or the obtainable coverage has been outside their financial means.

(5) There are long-term threats to public health and water quality if a comprehensive, uniform, and efficient corrective action program is not established.

(6) It is in the best interest of the health and safety of the people of the state to establish a fund to pay for corrective action where coverage is not available.

(7) A uniform, comprehensive, and efficient program establishing financial responsibility and corrective action requirements for leaking underground storage tanks containing petroleum will enable private commercial insurers to expand the availability and affordability of insurance coverage.

(8) An efficient program of establishing corrective action requirements and funds or insurance coverage should encourage corrective action to be taken in the first instance by the owner or



operator of the leaking underground storage tank containing petroleum.

(9) Subchapter IX (commencing with Section 6991) of Chapter 82 of Title 42 of the United States Code provides for regulation of underground storage tanks and allows underground storage tanks to be regulated pursuant to a state program, in lieu of a federal program, in states which are authorized to implement these provisions.

(10) It is in the interest of the people of the state, in order to avoid direct regulation by the federal government of persons already subject to regulation under state law pursuant to Chapter 6.7 (commencing with Section 25280), to authorize the state to implement the provisions of Subchapter IX (commencing with Section 6991) of Chapter 82 of Title 42 of the United States Code, including any acts amending or supplementing Subchapter IX and any federal regulations and guidelines adopted pursuant to Subchapter IX.

(11) It is in the public interest for the state to provide financial assistance to small businesses and farms which have limited financial resources, to ensure timely compliance with the law governing underground storage tanks, and to ensure the adequate protection of groundwater.

(12) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as waiving any immunity provided the state or its departments and agencies by the United States Constitution.

SEC. 3. Section 25299.11.5 is added to the Health and Safety Code, to read:

25299.11.5. “Adjudicative proceeding” has the same meaning as defined in Section 11405.20 of the Government Code.

SEC. 4. Section 25299.13 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

25299.13. “Claim” means a written request for payment of costs eligible for reimbursement from the fund.

SEC. 5. Section 25299.23.1 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

25299.23.1. (a) “Site” means the parcel of real property at which an underground storage tank is located.

(b) If underground storage tanks are located at adjacent parcels of real property, the adjacent parcels together constitute one site if both of the following apply:

(1) The underground storage tanks are, or have been, operated by the same person.

(2) The adjacent parcels are under common ownership or control.

(c) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), the board may consider a parcel of real property as consisting of multiple sites, corresponding to the number of distinct underground storage tank operations at the parcel, if the board makes both of the following findings:



(1) There is more than one underground storage tank located at the parcel.

(2) Each separately operated underground storage tank or group of underground storage tanks is not, and has not been, operated by a person who is operating or has operated another underground storage tank at the same parcel.

SEC. 6. Section 25299.24 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

25299.24. “Tank”, “underground storage tank,” “underground tank system,” and “tank system” have the same meaning as defined in Chapter 6.7 (commencing with Section 25280), except that “tank”, “underground storage tank,” “underground tank system,” and “tank system” mean only those tanks that are defined as petroleum underground storage tanks under the federal act.

SEC. 7. Section 25299.37 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

25299.37. (a) Each owner, operator, or other responsible party shall take corrective action in response to an unauthorized release in compliance with this article and regulations adopted pursuant to Section 25299.77. In adopting regulations pursuant to Section 25299.77, the board shall develop corrective action requirements for health hazards and protection of the environment, based on the severity of the health hazards and the other factors listed in subdivision (b).

(b) Any corrective action conducted pursuant to this chapter shall ensure protection of human health, safety, and the environment. The corrective action shall be consistent with any applicable waste discharge requirements or other order issued pursuant to Division 7 (commencing with Section 13000) of the Water Code, all applicable state policies for water quality control adopted pursuant to Article 3 (commencing with Section 13140) of Chapter 3 of Division 7 of the Water Code, and all applicable water quality control plans adopted pursuant to Section 13170 of the Water Code and Article 3 (commencing with Section 13240) of Chapter 4 of Division 7 of the Water Code.

(c) (1) When a local agency, the board, or a regional board requires an owner, operator, or other responsible party to undertake corrective action, including preliminary site assessment and investigation, pursuant to an oral or written order, direction, notification, or approval issued pursuant to this section, or pursuant to a cleanup and abatement order or other oral or written directive issued pursuant to Division 7 (commencing with Section 13000) of the Water Code, the owner, operator, or other responsible party shall prepare a work plan that details the corrective action the owner, operator, or other responsible party shall take to comply with the requirements of subdivisions (a) and (b) and the corrective action regulations adopted pursuant to Section 25299.77.



(2) The work plan required by paragraph (1) shall be prepared in accordance with the regulations adopted pursuant to Section 25299.77. The work plan shall include a schedule and timeline for corrective action.

(3) At the request of the owner, operator, or other responsible party, the local agency, the board, or the regional board shall review a work plan prepared pursuant to paragraph (1) and either accept the work plan, if it meets the requirements of this section, or disapprove the work plan if it does not meet those requirements. If the local agency, board, or the regional board accepts the work plan, it shall indicate to the owner, operator, or other responsible party, the actions or other elements of the work plan that are, in all likelihood, adequate and necessary to meet the requirements of this section, and the actions and elements that may be unnecessary. If the local agency, board, or regional board disapproves the work plan, it shall state the reasons for the disapproval.

(4) In the interests of minimizing environmental contamination and promoting prompt cleanup, the responsible party may begin implementation of the proposed actions after the work plan has been submitted but before the work plan has received regulatory agency acceptance, except that implementation of the work plan may not begin until 60 calendar days from the date of submittal, unless the responsible party is otherwise directed in writing by the regulatory agency. However, before beginning implementation pursuant to this paragraph, the responsible party shall notify the regulatory agency of the intent to initiate proposed actions set forth in the submitted work plan.

(5) The owner, operator, or other responsible party shall conduct corrective actions in accordance with the work plan approved pursuant to the section.

(6) (A) The local agency, the board, or the regional board shall advise and work with the owner, operator, or other responsible party on the opportunity to seek preapproval of corrective action costs pursuant to Section 2811.4 of Title 23 of the California Code of Regulations or any successor regulation. Regional board staff and local agency staff shall work with the responsible party and fund staff to obtain preapproval for the responsible party. The fund staff shall grant or deny a request for preapproval within 30 calendar days after the date a request is received. If fund staff denies a request for preapproval or fails to act within 30 calendar days after receiving the request, an owner, operator, or other responsible party who has prepared a work plan that has been reviewed and accepted pursuant to paragraph (3), and is denied preapproval of corrective action costs for one or more of the actions required by the work plan, may petition the board for review of the request for preapproval. The board shall review the petition pursuant to Section 25299.56, and for that purpose the petition for review of a request for preapproval of corrective



action costs shall be reviewed by the board in the same manner as a petition for review of an unpaid claim.

(B) If the board receives a petition for review pursuant to subparagraph (A), the board shall review the request for preapproval and grant or deny the request pursuant to this subparagraph and subparagraph (C). The board shall deny the request for preapproval if the board makes one of the following findings:

(i) The petitioner is not eligible to file a claim pursuant to Article 6 (commencing with Section 25299.50).

(ii) The petitioner failed to submit one or more of the documents required by the regulations adopted by the board governing preapproval.

(iii) The petitioner failed to obtain three bids or estimates for corrective action costs and, under the circumstances pertaining to the corrective action, there is no valid reason to waive the three-bid requirement pursuant to the regulations adopted by the board.

(C) If the board does not deny the request for preapproval pursuant to subparagraph (B), the board shall grant the request for preapproval. However, the board may modify the request by denying preapproval of corrective action costs or reducing the preapproved amount of those costs for any action required by the work plan, if the board finds that the fund staff has demonstrated either of the following:

(i) The amount of corrective action reimbursement requested for the action is not reasonable. In determining if the fund staff has demonstrated that the amount of reimbursement requested for an action is not reasonable, the board shall use, when available, recent experience with bids or estimates for similar actions.

(ii) The action required in the work plan is, in all likelihood, not necessary for the corrective action to comply with the requirements of subdivisions (a) and (b) and the corrective action regulations adopted pursuant to Section 25299.77.

(7) When the local agency, the board, or the regional board requires a responsible party to conduct corrective action pursuant to this article, it shall inform the responsible party of its right to request the designation of an administering agency to oversee the site investigation and remedial action at its site pursuant to Section 25262 and, if requested to do so by the responsible party, the local agency shall provide assistance to the responsible party in preparing and processing a request for that designation.

(d) Notwithstanding Section 25297.1, the board shall implement a procedure that does not assess an owner, operator, or responsible party taking corrective action pursuant to this chapter for the costs of a local oversight program pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (d) of Section 25297.1. The board shall institute an internal procedure for assessing, reviewing, and paying those costs directly between the



board and the local agency. At least 15 days before the board proposes to disapprove a claim for corrective action costs which have been incurred on the grounds that the costs were unreasonable or unnecessary, the board shall issue a notice advising the claimant and the lead agency of the proposed disallowance, to allow review and comment.

(e) A person to whom an order is issued pursuant to subdivision (c), shall have the same rights of administrative and judicial appeal and review as are provided by law for cleanup and abatement orders issued pursuant to Section 13304 of the Water Code.

(f) Until the board adopts regulations pursuant to Section 25299.77, the owner, operator, or other responsible party shall take corrective action in accordance with Chapter 6.7 (commencing with Section 25280) and the federal act.

(g) If a person to whom an order is issued pursuant to subdivision (c) does not comply with the order, the regional board or the local agency may undertake or contract for corrective action and recover costs pursuant to Section 25299.70.

(h) The following uniform closure letter shall be issued to the owner, operator or other responsible party taking corrective action at an underground storage tank site by the local agency or the regional board with jurisdiction over the site, or the board, upon a finding that the underground storage tank site is in compliance with the requirements of subdivisions (a) and (b) and with any corrective action regulations adopted pursuant to Section 25299.77 and that no further corrective action is required at the site:

“[Case File Number]

Dear [Responsible Party]

This letter confirms the completion of a site investigation and corrective action for the underground storage tank(s) formerly located at the above-described location. Thank you for your cooperation throughout this investigation. Your willingness and promptness in responding to our inquiries concerning the former underground storage tank(s) are greatly appreciated.



Based on information in the above-referenced file and with the provision that the information provided to this agency was accurate and representative of site conditions, this agency finds that the site investigation and corrective action carried out at your underground storage tank(s) site is in compliance with the requirements of subdivisions (a) and (b) of Section 25299.37 of the Health and Safety Code and with corrective action regulations adopted pursuant to Section 25299.77 of the Health and Safety Code and that no further action related to the petroleum release(s) at the site is required.

This notice is issued pursuant to subdivision (h) of Section 25299.37 of the Health and Safety Code.

Please contact our office if you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

[Name of Board Executive Director, Regional Board Executive Officer, or Local Agency Director]"

SEC. 8. Section 25299.38 of the Health and Safety Code is repealed.

SEC. 9. Section 25299.39 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

25299.39. (a) (1) Unless the board, in consultation with local agencies and the regional board determines that a site is an emergency site, the board, at the request of an eligible responsible party, may suspend additional corrective action or investigation work at a site, based on a preliminary site assessment conducted in accordance with the regulations adopted by the board implementing Section 25299.37, but the board shall not suspend any of the following activities pursuant to this section:

(A) Removal of, or approved modifications of, existing tanks.

(B) Excavation of petroleum saturated soil or removal of excess petroleum from saturated soil.

(C) Removal of free product from the saturated and unsaturated zones.

(D) Periodic monitoring to ensure that released petroleum is not migrating in an uncontrolled manner that will cause the site to become an emergency site.



(2) For purposes of this subdivision, “emergency site” means a site that, because of an unauthorized release of petroleum, meets one of the following conditions:

(A) The site presents an imminent threat to public health or safety or the environment.

(B) The site poses a substantial probability of causing a condition of contamination or nuisance, as defined in Section 13050 of the Water Code, or of causing pollution of a source of drinking water at a level that is a violation of a primary or secondary drinking water standard adopted by the State Department of Health Services pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 116270) of Part 12 of Division 104.

(b) The suspension shall continue until one of the following occurs:

(1) The board provides the eligible responsible party with a letter of commitment that the party will receive reimbursement for the corrective action.

(2) The responsible party requests in writing that the suspension be terminated and that the work continue.

(3) The fund is no longer in existence.

(c) The board shall adopt regulations that specify the conditions under which a site is an imminent threat to public health or safety or to the environment or poses a substantial probability of causing a condition of contamination, nuisance, or pollution as specified in paragraph (2) of subdivision (a). The board shall not suspend corrective action or investigation work at any site pursuant to this section until the effective date of the regulations adopted by the board pursuant to this subdivision.

SEC. 10. Section 25299.39.1 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

25299.39.1. (a) The board shall develop, implement, and maintain a system for storing and retrieving data from cases involving discharges of petroleum from underground storage tanks to allow regulatory agencies and the general public to use historic data in making decisions regarding permitting, land use, and other matters. The system shall be accessible to government agencies and the general public. A site included in the data system shall be clearly designated as having no residual contamination if, at the time the site is closed or at any time after closure, the board determines that no residual contamination remains on the site.

(b) For purposes of this section, “residual contamination” means the petroleum that remains on a site after a corrective action has been carried out and the cleanup levels established by the corrective action plan for the site, pursuant to subdivision (g) of Section 2725 of Title 23 of the California Code of Regulations, have been achieved.

SEC. 11. Section 25299.39.2 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:



25299.39.2. (a) The manager responsible for the fund shall notify tank owners or operators who have an active letter of commitment that has been in an active status for five years or more and shall review the case history of their tank case on an annual basis unless otherwise notified by the tank owner or operator within 30 days of the notification. The manager, with approval of the tank owner or operator, may make a recommendation to the board for closure. The board may close the tank case or require the closure of a tank case at a site under the jurisdiction of a regional board or a local agency implementing a local oversight program under Section 25297.1 if the board determines that corrective action at the site is in compliance with all of the requirements of subdivisions (a) and (b) of Section 25299.37 and the corrective action regulations adopted pursuant to Section 25299.77. If a tank case is at a site under the jurisdiction of a local agency that is not implementing a local oversight program under Section 25297.1, the board may recommend to the local agency that the case be closed.

(b) (1) Any owner, operator, or other responsible party who has a tank case and who believes that the corrective action plan for the site has been satisfactorily implemented, but where closure has not been granted, may petition the board for a review of the case, whether or not the petitioner is eligible for reimbursement from the fund pursuant to Section 25299.54.

(2) Upon receipt of a petition pursuant to paragraph (1), the board may close the tank case or require closure, if the tank case is at a site under the jurisdiction of a regional board or a local agency that is implementing a local oversight program under Section 25297.1 and if the board determines that corrective action at the site is in compliance with all of the requirements of subdivisions (a) and (b) of Section 25299.37 and the corrective action regulations adopted pursuant to Section 25299.77. If a tank case is at a site under the jurisdiction of a local agency that is not implementing a local oversight program pursuant to Section 25297.1, the board may recommend to the local agency that the tank case be closed.

(c) Any aggrieved person may, not later than 30 days from the date of final action by the board, pursuant to subdivision (a) or (b), file with the superior court a petition for writ of mandate for review of the decision. If the aggrieved person does not file a petition for writ of mandate within the time provided by this subdivision, a board decision shall not be subject to review by any court. Section 1094.5 of the Code of Civil Procedure shall govern proceedings for which petitions are filed pursuant to this subdivision. For purposes of subdivision (c) of Section 1094.5 of the Code of Civil Procedure, the court shall uphold the decision if the decision is based upon substantial evidence in light of the whole record.



(d) The authority provided under this section does not limit a person's ability to petition the board for review under any other state law.

SEC. 12. Section 25299.51 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

25299.51. The board may expend the money in the fund for all of the following purposes:

(a) In addition to the purposes specified in subdivisions (c), (d), and (e), for expenditure by the board for the costs of implementing this chapter, which shall include costs incurred by the board pursuant to Article 8.5 (commencing with Section 25299.80.1).

(b) To pay for the administrative costs of the State Board of Equalization in collecting the fee imposed by Article 5 (commencing with Section 25299.40).

(c) To pay for the reasonable and necessary costs of the regional board or local agency for corrective action pursuant to Section 25299.36, up to one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence. The Legislature may appropriate the money in the fund for expenditure by the board, without regard to fiscal year, for prompt action in response to any unauthorized release.

(d) To pay for the costs of an agreement for the abatement of, and oversight of the abatement of, an unauthorized release of hazardous substances from underground storage tanks, by a local agency, as authorized by Section 25297.1 or by any other provision of law, except that, for the purpose of expenditure of these funds, only underground storage tanks, as defined in Section 25299.24, shall be the subject of the agreement.

(e) To pay for the costs of cleanup and oversight of unauthorized releases at abandoned tank sites. The board shall not expend more than 25 percent of the total amount of money collected and deposited in the fund annually for the purposes of this subdivision and subdivision (h).

(f) To pay claims pursuant to Section 25299.57.

(g) To pay, upon order of the Controller, for refunds pursuant to Part 26 (commencing with Section 50101) of Division 2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code.

(h) To pay for the reasonable and necessary costs of the regional board or the local agency for corrective action pursuant to subdivision (g) of Section 25299.37.

(i) To pay claims pursuant to Section 25299.58.

SEC. 13. Section 25299.52 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

25299.52. (a) The board shall adopt a priority ranking list at least annually for awarding claims pursuant to Section 25299.57 or 25299.58. Any owner or operator eligible for payment of a claim pursuant to Section 25299.54 shall file an application with the board



within a reasonable period, to be determined by the board, prior to adoption of the priority ranking list.

(b) Except as provided in subdivision (c), in awarding claims pursuant to Section 25299.57 or 25299.58, the board shall pay claims in accordance with the following order of priority:

(1) Owners of tanks who are eligible to file a claim pursuant to subdivision (e) of Section 25299.54.

(2) Owners and operators of tanks which are either of the following:

(A) An owner or operator of a tank that is a small business, by meeting the requirements of subdivision (d) of Section 14837 of the Government Code. An owner or operator which meets that definition of small business, but who is domiciled or has its principle office outside of the state, shall be classified in this category if the owner or operator otherwise meet the requirements of subdivision (d) of Section 14837 of the Government Code with regard to the number of employees and the total annual revenues received.

(B) An owner or operator which is a city, county, district, or nonprofit organization that receives total annual revenues of not more than seven million dollars (\$7,000,000). In determining the amount of a nonprofit organization's annual revenues, the board shall calculate only those revenues directly attributable to the particular site at which the tank or tanks for which the claim is submitted are located.

(3) Owners or operators of tanks which are either of the following:

(A) The owner or operator owns and operates a business which employs fewer than 500 full-time and part-time employees, is independently owned and operated, and is not dominant in its field of operation.

(B) The owner or operator is a city, county, district, or nonprofit organization that employs fewer than 500 full-time and part-time employees. In determining the number of employees employed by a nonprofit organization, the board shall calculate only those employees employed at the particular site at which the tank or tanks for which the claim is submitted are located.

(4) All other tank owners and operators.

(c) (1) In any year in which the board is not otherwise authorized to award at least 15 percent of the total amount of funds committed for that year to tank owners or operators in those categories set forth in paragraph (3) or (4) of subdivision (b) due to the priority ranking list award limitations set forth in subdivision (b), the board shall allocate between 14 and 16 percent of the total amount of funds committed for that year to each category that is not otherwise entitled to at least that level of committed funding for that year.

(2) If the total amount of claims outstanding in one or more of the priority categories specified in paragraph (3) or (4) of subdivision (b) is less than 15 percent of the total amount annually appropriated



from the fund for the purpose of awarding claims, the board shall reserve for making claims in that category only the amount that is necessary to satisfy the outstanding claims in that category.

(d) The board shall give priority to a claim that is filed before September 24, 1993, by a city, county, or district that is eligible for payment pursuant to Section 25299.54 in the following manner:

(1) The board shall determine whether the priority category specified for a city, county, or district pursuant to subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2), or pursuant to subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3), of subdivision (b) requires that the priority ranking of the claim be changed.

(2) If the priority ranking of the claim is changed and the claim is placed into either the priority category specified in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2), or specified in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3), of subdivision (b), the board shall pay all other claims that were assigned to that priority category prior to September 24, 1993, before paying the claim of the city, county, or district.

(e) The board may, to carry out the intent specified in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) of Section 25299.10 and to expedite the processing and awarding of claims pursuant to Sections 25299.57 and 25299.58, implement the contracting procedures required by Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 4525) of Division 5 of Title 1 of the Government Code, as may be necessary, to alleviate the claims processing and award backlog. If, at the conclusion of any fiscal year, 25 percent or more of the funds appropriated annually for awards to claimants during that year have not actually been obligated by the board, the board shall, at its next regularly scheduled meeting, determine, in a public hearing, whether, given the circumstances of the awards backlog, it is appropriate to implement those contracting procedures for some, or all, of the claims filed with the board.

(f) For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) "Nonprofit organization" means a nonprofit public benefit organization incorporated pursuant to Part 2 (commencing with Section 5110) of Division 2 of Title 1 of the Corporations Code.

(2) "Annual revenue," with respect to public entities, means the total annual general purpose revenues, excluding all restricted revenues over which the governing agency has no discretion, as reported in the Annual Report of Financial Transactions submitted to the Controller, for the latest fiscal year ending prior to the date the fund reimbursement claim application was filed.

(3) "Annual revenue," with respect to nonprofit organizations, means the total annual revenues, as shown in an annual fiscal report filed with the Registry of Charitable Trusts of state and federal tax records, based on the latest fiscal year ending prior to the date the fund reimbursement claim application was filed.



(4) “General purpose revenues,” as used in paragraph (2), means revenues consisting of all of the following: secured and unsecured revenues; less than countywide funds, secured and unsecured; prior year secured and unsecured penalties and delinquent taxes; sales and use taxes; transportation taxes (nontransit); property transfer taxes; transient lodging taxes; timber yield taxes; aircraft taxes; franchise taxes; fines, forfeitures, and penalties; revenues from use of money and property; motor vehicle in-lieu taxes; trailer coach in-lieu taxes; homeowner property tax relief; open-space tax relief; and cigarette taxes.

SEC. 14. Section 25299.53 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

25299.53. (a) A regional board or a local agency taking, or contracting for, corrective action pursuant to subdivision (g) of Section 25299.37 shall, before commencing the corrective action, take both of the following actions:

(1) The regional board or local agency shall notify the board of the planned corrective action. If an owner, operator, or other responsible party is taking the corrective action in accordance with Section 25299.37, the regional board or local agency shall not initiate a corrective action pursuant to this chapter.

(2) If an owner, operator, or other responsible party is not taking or has not taken the action specified in paragraph (1), the regional board or local agency shall submit the estimated cost of the corrective action to the board, which shall approve or disapprove the reasonableness of the cost estimate. The regional board or local agency shall obtain approval of the corrective action and the cost estimate before taking, or contracting for, any corrective action.

(b) If the board approves the request of the regional board or local agency made pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (a), the board shall, after making the determination specified in subdivision (c), pay for the costs of corrective action performed by a regional board, local agency, or qualified contractor.

(c) The board shall not make any payment pursuant to subdivision (b) unless the board determines that the owner, operator, or other responsible party of the tank has failed or refused to comply with a final order for corrective action issued pursuant to Section 25299.37 with respect to the unauthorized release of petroleum from the tank.

(d) Upon making any payment to a regional board or local agency pursuant to subdivision (b), the board shall recover the amount of payment pursuant to Section 25299.70.

SEC. 15. Section 25299.54 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

25299.54. (a) Except as provided in subdivisions (b), (c), (d), (e), and (g), an owner or operator, required to perform corrective action pursuant to Section 25299.37, or an owner or operator who, as of January 1, 1988, is required to perform corrective action, who has



initiated this action in accordance with Division 7 (commencing with Section 13000) of the Water Code, who is undertaking corrective action in compliance with waste discharge requirements or other orders issued pursuant to Division 7 (commencing with Section 13000) of the Water Code, or Chapter 6.7 (commencing with Section 25280), may apply to the board for satisfaction of a claim filed pursuant to this article.

(b) A person who has failed to comply with Article 3 (commencing with Section 25299.30) is ineligible to file a claim pursuant to this section.

(c) Any owner or operator of an underground storage tank containing petroleum is ineligible to file a claim pursuant to this section if the person meets both of the following conditions:

(1) The person knew, before January 1, 1988, of the unauthorized release of petroleum which is the subject of the claim.

(2) The person did not initiate, on or before June 30, 1988, any corrective action in accordance with Division 7 (commencing with Section 13000) of the Water Code concerning the release, or the person did not, on or before June 30, 1988, initiate corrective action in accordance with Chapter 6.7 (commencing with Section 25280) or the person did not initiate action on or before June 30, 1988, to come into compliance with waste discharge requirements or other orders issued pursuant to Division 7 (commencing with Section 13000) of the Water Code concerning the release.

(d) An owner or operator who violates Article 4 (commencing with Section 25299.36) is liable for any corrective action costs that result from the owner's or operator's violation of Article 4 (commencing with Section 25299.36) and is ineligible to file a claim pursuant to this section.

(e) Notwithstanding this chapter, a person who owns a tank located underground that is used to store petroleum may apply to the board for satisfaction of a claim, and the board may pay the claim pursuant to Section 25299.57 without making the findings specified in paragraph (3) of subdivision (d) of Section 25299.57 if all of the following apply:

(1) The tank meets one of the following requirements:

(A) The tank is located at the residence of a person on property used exclusively for residential purposes at the time of discovery of the unauthorized release of petroleum.

(B) The tank owner demonstrates that the tank is located on property which, on and after January 1, 1985, is not used for agricultural purposes, the tank is of a type specified in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (x) of Section 25281, and the petroleum in the tank is used solely for the purposes specified in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (x) of Section 25281 on and after January 1, 1985.



(2) The tank is not a tank described in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (x) of Section 25281 and the tank is not used on or after January 1, 1985, for the purposes specified in that subparagraph.

(3) The claimant has complied with Section 25299.31 and the permit requirements of Chapter 6.7 (commencing with Section 25280), or the claimant is not subject to the requirements of those provisions.

(f) Whenever the board has authorized the prepayment of a claim pursuant to Section 25299.57, and the amount of money available in the fund is insufficient to pay the claim, the owner or operator shall remain obligated to undertake the corrective action in accordance with Section 25299.37.

(g) The board shall not reimburse a claimant for any eligible costs for which the claimant has been, or will be, compensated by another person. This subdivision does not affect reimbursement of a claimant from the fund under either of the following circumstances:

(1) The claimant has a written contract, other than an insurance contract, with another person that requires the claimant to reimburse the person for payments the person has provided the claimant pending receipt of reimbursement from the fund.

(2) An insurer has made payments on behalf of the claimant pursuant to an insurance contract and either of the following apply:

(A) The insurance contract explicitly coordinates insurance benefits with the fund and requires the claimant to do both of the following:

(i) Maintain the claimant's eligibility for reimbursement of costs pursuant to this chapter by complying with all applicable eligibility requirements.

(ii) Reimburse the insurer for costs paid by the insurer pending reimbursement of those costs by the fund.

(B) The claimant received a letter of commitment prior to June 30, 1999, for the occurrence and the claimant is required to reimburse the insurer for any costs paid by the insurer pending reimbursement of those costs by the fund.

(h) The Legislature finds and declares that the changes made to subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (e) by Chapter 1290 of the Statutes of 1992 is declaratory of existing law.

(i) The Legislature finds and declares that the amendment of subdivisions (a) and (g) by the act amending this section during the 1999–2000 Regular Session is declaratory of existing law.

SEC. 16. Section 25299.56 of the Health and Safety Code is repealed.

SEC. 17. Section 25299.56 is added to the Health and Safety Code, to read:

25299.56. (a) The board shall determine an applicant's eligibility for a claim for corrective action costs or third-party compensation



costs pursuant to Section 25299.57 or 25299.58 and notify the applicant of that determination within 60 days from the date of the receipt of the claim application. The board may classify the claimant's application pursuant to Section 25299.52 after that 60-day period. If the board sends an applicant a determination of eligibility pursuant to this subdivision, the board shall not revoke that determination of eligibility, unless the application contained fraudulent information or a misrepresentation. However, the board may suspend making a reimbursement for a claim until the claimant corrects any deficiencies that are the basis for the suspension. Reinstatement of reimbursement shall occur when funds are available and that reinstatement shall be made ahead of any new letters of commitment issued as of the date of reinstatement.

(b) A claimant may request review of any claim or portion of a claim not paid. The review shall be conducted and a decision rendered within 30 days from the date of receipt of the request.

(c) A claimant may file a petition for review, in writing, with the board with regard to any unpaid claim that is unresolved to the satisfaction of the claimant upon expiration of the 30-day period specified in subdivision (b) and the board shall take final action on the petition within 90 days of the board's receipt of a complete petition for review, except that if the board initiates an adjudicative proceeding on the petition, the board shall take final action within 270 days of the board's receipt of a complete petition for review.

(d) Final action on a petition taken by the board is a final agency action for the purposes of judicial review of a board decision.

(e) A claimant may, not later than 30 days from the date of final action by the board pursuant to subdivision (c), file with the superior court a petition for writ of mandate for review of the decision. If the claimant does not file a petition for writ of mandate within the time provided by this subdivision, a board decision shall not be subject to review by the court. Section 1094.5 of the Code of Civil Procedure shall govern the proceeding for a petition filed pursuant to this subdivision. For purposes of subdivision (c) of Section 1094.5 of the Code of Civil Procedure, the court shall uphold the decision if the decision is based upon substantial evidence in light of the whole record.

(f) Except as specified in subdivision (g), the procedures in Article 8 (commencing with Section 11435.05) of Chapter 4.5 of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of, and in Section 11513 of, the Government Code apply to any adjudicative proceedings conducted by the board pursuant to this article.

(g) (1) Notwithstanding subdivision (f), Sections 801, 802, 803, 804, and 805 of the Evidence Code apply to any adjudicative proceeding conducted by the board pursuant to this article.

(2) This section is not a limitation on the authority of the board to authorize the use of the procedure provided in Article 10



(commencing with Section 11445.10) of Chapter 4.5 of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

SEC. 18. Section 25299.57 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

25299.57. (a) If the board makes the determination specified in subdivision (d), the board may only pay for the costs of a corrective action that exceeds the level of financial responsibility required to be obtained pursuant to Section 25299.32, but not more than one million dollars (\$1,000,000) for each occurrence. In the case of an owner or operator who, as of January 1, 1988, was required to perform corrective action, who initiated that corrective action in accordance with Division 7 (commencing with Section 13000) of the Water Code or Chapter 6.7 (commencing with Section 25280), and who is undertaking the corrective action in compliance with waste discharge requirements or other orders issued pursuant to Division 7 (commencing with Section 13000) of the Water Code or Chapter 6.7 (commencing with Section 25280), the owner or operator may apply to the board for satisfaction of a claim filed pursuant to this article. It is the intent of the Legislature that claimants applying for satisfaction of claims from the fund be notified of eligibility for reimbursement in a prompt and timely manner and that a letter of credit or commitment that will obligate funds for reimbursement follow the notice of eligibility as soon thereafter as possible.

(b) (1) For claims eligible for reimbursement pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section 25299.55, the claimant shall submit the actual cost of corrective action to the board, which shall either approve or disapprove the costs incurred as reasonable and necessary.

(2) The board shall not reject any actual costs of corrective action in a claim solely on the basis that the invoices submitted fail to sufficiently detail the actual costs incurred, if all of the following applies:

(A) Auxiliary documentation is provided which documents to the board's satisfaction that the invoice is for necessary corrective action work.

(B) The costs of corrective action work in the claim are reasonably commensurate with similar corrective action work performed during the same time period covered by the invoice for which reimbursement is sought.

(C) The invoices include a brief description of the work performed, the date that the work was performed, the vendor, and the amount.

(c) For claims eligible for prepayment pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section 25299.55, the claimant shall submit the estimated cost of the corrective action to the board, which shall approve or disapprove the reasonableness of the cost estimate.



(d) Except as provided in subdivision (j), a claim specified in subdivision (a) may be paid if the board makes all of the following findings:

(1) There has been an unauthorized release of petroleum into the environment from an underground storage tank.

(2) The claimant is required to undertake or contract for corrective action pursuant to Section 25299.37, or, as of January 1, 1988, the claimant has initiated corrective action in accordance with Division 7 (commencing with Section 13000) of the Water Code.

(3) (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the claimant has complied with Section 25299.31 and the permit requirements of Chapter 6.7 (commencing with Section 25280).

(B) All claimants who file their claim on or after January 1, 1994, and all claimants who filed their claim prior to that date but are not eligible for a waiver of the permit requirement pursuant to board regulations in effect on the date of the filing of the claim, and who did not obtain or apply for any permit required by subdivision (a) of Section 25284 by January 1, 1990, shall be subject to subparagraph (A) regardless of the reason or reasons that the permit was not obtained or applied for. However, on and after January 1, 1994, the board may waive the provisions of subparagraph (A) as a condition for payment from the fund if the board finds all of the following:

(i) The claimant was unaware of the permit requirement prior to January 1, 1990, and there was no intent to intentionally avoid the permit requirement or the fees associated with the permit.

(ii) Prior to submittal of the application to the fund, the claimant has complied with Section 25299.31 and has obtained and paid for all permits currently required by this paragraph.

(iii) Prior to submittal of the application to the fund, the claimant has paid all current underground storage tank fees imposed pursuant to Section 25299.41 and all prior fees due on and after January 1, 1991.

(C) (i) A claimant exempted pursuant to subparagraph (B) shall obtain a level of financial responsibility twice as great as the amount which the claimant is otherwise required to obtain pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 25299.32.

(ii) The board may waive the requirements of clause (i) if the claimant can demonstrate that the conditions specified in clauses (i) to (iii), inclusive, of subparagraph (B) were satisfied prior to the causing of any contamination. That demonstration may be made through a certification issued by the permitting agency based on site and tank tests at the time of permit application or in any other manner acceptable to the board.

(D) The board shall rank all claims resubmitted pursuant to subparagraph (B) lower than all claims filed before January 1, 1994, within their respective priority classes specified in subdivision (b) of Section 25299.52.



(4) The board has approved either the costs incurred for the corrective action pursuant to subdivision (b) or the estimated costs for corrective action pursuant to subdivision (c).

(e) The board shall provide the claimant, whose cost estimate has been approved, a letter of credit authorizing payment of the costs from the fund.

(f) The claimant may submit a claim for partial payment to cover the costs of corrective action performed in stages, as approved by the board.

(g) (1) Any claimant who submits a claim for payment to the board shall submit multiple bids for prospective costs as prescribed in regulations adopted by the board pursuant to Section 25299.77.

(2) Any claimant who submits a claim to the board for the payment of professional engineering and geologic work shall submit multiple proposals and fee estimates, as required by the regulations adopted by the board pursuant to Section 25299.77. The claimant's selection of the provider of these services is not required to be based on the lowest estimated fee, if the fee estimate conforms with the range of acceptable costs established by the board.

(3) Any claimant who submits a claim for payment to the board for remediation construction contracting work shall submit multiple bids, as required in the regulations adopted by the board pursuant to Section 25299.77.

(4) Paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) do not apply to a tank owned or operated by a public agency if the prospective costs are for private professional services within the meaning of Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 4525) of Division 5 of Title 1 of the Government Code and those services are procured in accordance with the requirements of that chapter.

(h) The board shall provide, upon the request of a claimant, assistance to the claimant in the selection of contractors retained by the claimant to conduct reimbursable work related to corrective actions. The board shall develop a summary of expected costs for common remedial actions. This summary of expected costs may be used by claimants as a guide in the selection and supervision of consultants and contractors.

(i) The board shall pay, within 60 days from the date of receipt of an invoice of expenditures, all costs specified in the work plan developed pursuant to Section 25299.37, and all costs which are otherwise necessary to comply with an order issued by a local, state, or federal agency.

(j) (1) The board shall pay a claim of not more than three thousand dollars (\$3,000) per occurrence for regulatory technical assistance to an owner or operator who is otherwise eligible for reimbursement under this chapter.

(2) For the purposes of this subdivision, regulatory technical assistance is limited to assistance from a person, other than the



claimant, in the preparation and submission of a claim to the fund. Regulatory technical assistance does not include assistance in connection with proceedings under Section 25299.39.2 or 25299.56 or any action in court.

(k) (1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the board shall pay a claim for the costs of corrective action to a person who owns property on which is located a release from a petroleum underground storage tank which has been the subject of a completed corrective action and for which additional corrective action is required because of additionally discovered contamination from the previous release, only if the person who carried out the earlier and completed corrective action was eligible for, and applied for, reimbursement pursuant to subdivision (b), and only to the extent that the amount of reimbursement for the earlier corrective action did not exceed the amount of reimbursement authorized by subdivision (a). Reimbursement to a claimant on a reopened site shall occur when funds are available, and reimbursement commitment shall be made ahead of any new letters of commitment to be issued, as of the date of the reopening of the claim, if funding has occurred on the original claim, in which case funding shall occur at the time it would have occurred under the original claim.

(2) For purposes of this subdivision, a corrective action is completed when the local agency or regional board with jurisdiction over the site or the board issues a closure letter pursuant to subdivision (h) of Section 25299.37.

SEC. 19. Section 25299.59 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

25299.59. (a) If the board has paid out of the fund for any costs of corrective action, the board shall not pay any other claim out of the fund for the same costs.

(b) Notwithstanding Sections 25299.57 and 25299.58, the board shall not reimburse or authorize prepayment of any claim in an aggregate amount exceeding one million dollars (\$1,000,000), less the minimum level of financial responsibility specified in Section 25299.32, for a claim arising from the same event or occurrence.

(c) The board may conduct an audit of any corrective action claim honored pursuant to this chapter. The claimant shall reimburse the state for any costs disallowed in the audit. A claimant shall preserve, and make available, upon request of the board or the board's designee, all records pertaining to the corrective action claim for a period of three years after the final payment is made to the claimant.

SEC. 20. Section 25299.62 is added to the Health and Safety Code, to read:

25299.62. All claims that are approved shall be forwarded to the Controller within 10 days from the date of approval, for payment by the Controller.



SEC. 21. Section 25299.63 is added to the Health and Safety Code, to read:

25299.63. This article does not require any person to pursue a claim against the board pursuant to this article before seeking any other remedy. This section does not affect the requirement for exhaustion of administrative remedies before obtaining judicial review of any action of the board on a claim or petition for closure of a tank case.

SEC. 22. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because a local agency or school district has the authority to levy service charges, fees, or assessments sufficient to pay for the program or level of service mandated by this act, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code.

