

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD**

ORDER WQ 2011-0015-UST

**In the Matter of the Petitions for Review of Denial of
Petroleum Underground Storage Tank Case Closure**

BY THE BOARD:

The petitioners, listed below, seek review of the decision that rejects closure of petitioner's case involving an unauthorized release of petroleum from an underground storage tank (UST). The site name, the name of each petitioner, and the applicable site address are as follows.

1. Former Chevron Service Station #9-0667,
Chevron Environmental Management Company (Petitioner)
412 Maple Lane, Garberville, CA
2. Beacon Station #3556, Ultramar, Inc. (Petitioner)
900 Morro Bay Boulevard, Morro Bay, CA

I. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Owners and operators of USTs and other responsible parties may petition the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) for a review of their case if they feel the corrective action plan for their site has been satisfactorily implemented, but closure has not been granted. (Health and Saf. Code, § 25296.40, subd. (a)(1).)

In response to a petition, the State Water Board may close the case or remand the case to the regulatory agency if the case is under the jurisdiction of a Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) or a local agency that is implementing the local oversight program pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 25297.1. (Health and Saf. Code, § 25296.40, subd. (a)(2).)

Several statutory and regulatory provisions provide the State Water Board, Regional Water Boards, and local agencies with broad authority to require responsible parties to clean up a release from a petroleum UST (e.g., Health & Saf. Code, § 25296.10; Wat. Code, § 13304,

subd. (a).) The State Water Board has promulgated regulations specifying corrective action requirements for petroleum UST cases. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, §§ 2720-2728.) The regulations define corrective action as "any activity necessary to investigate and analyze the effects of an unauthorized release, propose a cost-effective plan to adequately protect human health, safety and the environment and to restore or protect current and potential beneficial uses of water, and implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the activity (ies)." (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 2720.)

Closure of a UST case is appropriate where the corrective action ensures the protection of human health, safety, and the environment and where the corrective action is consistent with: (1) Chapter 6.7 of the Health and Safety Code and implementing regulations; (2) Any applicable waste discharge requirements or other order issued pursuant to Division 7 of the Water Code; (3) All applicable state policies for water quality control; and (4) All applicable water quality control plans.

State Water Board Resolution No. 92-49, *Policies and Procedures for Investigation and Cleanup and Abatement of Discharges Under Water Code Section 13304* is a state policy for water quality control and applies to petroleum UST cases. State Water Board Resolution No. 92-49 directs that water affected by an unauthorized release attain either background water quality or the best water quality that is reasonable if background water quality cannot be restored. (State Water Board Resolution No. 92-49, Section III.G.) Any alternative level of water quality less stringent than background must be consistent with the maximum benefit to the people of the state, not unreasonably affect current and anticipated beneficial use of affected water, and not result in water quality less than that prescribed in the water quality control plan for the basin within which the site is located. (*Ibid.*) Resolution No. 92-49 does not require, however, that the requisite level of water quality be met at the time of site closure. Resolution No. 92-49 specifies compliance with cleanup goals and objectives within a reasonable time frame (*Id.* at section III.A.). Therefore, even if the requisite level of water quality has not yet been attained, a site may be closed if the level will be attained within a reasonable period.

Regional Water Boards adopt Regional Water Quality Control Plans (Basin Plans) for their respective regions and Basin Plans are approved by the State Water Board. Basin Plans include beneficial uses of water for the applicable region and water quality objectives (WQOs) to protect specific beneficial uses of water. Each UST Case Closure Summary identifies relevant beneficial uses and WQOs from the applicable Basin Plan.

II. CONTENTIONS AND FINDINGS

All petitioners contend that the corrective action performed at their respective sites ensures the protection of human health, safety and the environment and that case closure is appropriate. Case-specific contentions are contained in individual UST Case Closure Summaries that have been prepared for each petition.

Based upon the UST Case Closure Summary, the State Water Board finds that corrective action performed at the UST release sites listed below ensures protection of human health, safety and the environment and is consistent with Chapter 6.7 of the Health and Safety Code and implementing regulations, State Water Board Resolution 92-49, and applicable water quality control plans.

1. [Former Chevron Service Station #9-0667](#)
Chevron Environmental Management Company (Petitioner)
412 Maple Lane, Garberville, CA
2. [Beacon Station #3556, Ultramar, Inc. \(Petitioner\)](#)
900 Morro Bay Boulevard, Morro Bay, CA

Some of the UST cases identified above may be the subject of orders issued by Regional Water Boards pursuant to Division 7 of the Water Code. Any orders that have been issued by Regional Water Boards pursuant to Division 7 of the Water Code for these cases that are inconsistent with case closure should be rescinded.

III. ORDER

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that:

- A. The UST cases identified in Section II of this Order are closed and no further action related to the UST case is required.
- B. The Deputy Director of the Division of Water Quality issue a closure letter consistent with Health and Safety Code, section 25296.10, subdivision (g) and upload the closure letter and UST Case Closure Summary for each case to GeoTracker.
- C. Any Regional Water Board order issued pursuant to Division 7 of the Water Code that directs corrective action or other action inconsistent with case closure for a UST case identified in Section II is rescinded.

CERTIFICATION


The undersigned, Clerk to the Board, does hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of an order duly and regularly adopted at a meeting of the State Water Resources Control Board held on September 19, 2011.

AYE: Chairman Charles R. Hoppin
Vice Chair Frances Spivy-Weber
Board Member Tam M. Doduc

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None



Jeanine Townsend
Clerk to the Board