
Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

Public Notice of Proposed Case Closure

**Former Washington Mutual Bank, 468 Washington Street, Monterey, California
April 26, 2021**

The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Coast Water Board) is providing this notification to the landowners, residents/occupants, tenants, and interested parties near this groundwater cleanup site to notify you and to solicit comments on the proposed case closure of the Former Washington Mutual Bank, 468 Washington Street, Monterey, California (Site). Central Coast Water Board staff have determined that there is no significant threat to groundwater resources, human health, or the environment from any residual contamination remaining at the Site, and that no further groundwater monitoring, investigation, or cleanup is necessary. This notification describes the Site background, previous environmental investigations and cleanup, and rationale for closure.

La Junta Regional para el Control de la Calidad del Agua (Junta de Agua) está notificándole a todos los inquilinos, propietarios, y a todas aquellas personas interesadas y que se encuentran cerca del área circundante al sitio donde se están llevando a cabo tareas de limpieza del suelo y de las aguas subterráneas, sobre el cierre de dicho sitio de limpieza y para solicitar comentarios. El personal de la Junta de Agua de la Costa Central ha determinado que no existe una amenaza significativa para los recursos de agua subterránea, la salud humana o el medio ambiente por cualquier contaminación residual que quede en el Sitio, y que no es necesario realizar más monitoreo, investigación o limpieza de las aguas subterráneas. Con esta notificación, también se describen los detalles y antecedentes del sitio, investigaciones ambientales y de limpiezas anteriores y la razón por la cual se cierra el sitio. Si desea obtener información en español, póngase en contacto con Monica Barricarte al (805) 549-3881.

Introduction

The Central Coast Water Board is the state regulatory agency responsible for the protection of groundwater and surface water quality within the Central Coast Region. The Central Coast Water Board is overseeing soil, soil gas, and groundwater investigation and cleanup at the Site (see attached map, TERRAX Figure 3). The purpose of this notification is to provide the public with a summary of the environmental investigations and cleanup activities and to solicit comments on a proposed site closure.

Site Background

The Site was reportedly used as a dry-cleaning facility from approximately 1953 to 1977. The dry-cleaning facility was removed circa 1978. The buildings have been removed and the Site is currently used as a parking lot. In 2001, analytical results for soil, soil gas, and groundwater samples collected at the Site indicated the release of chlorinated solvents, specifically tetrachloroethene (PCE) and associated degradation products from historical dry-cleaning operations.

Since 2001, Washington Mutual Bank, now JPMorgan Chase, has performed Site environmental investigation and remediation activities. In 2002 and 2003, four on-site groundwater monitoring wells (MW-1 through MW-4) and one off-site groundwater monitoring well (MW-5) were installed and have been sampled regularly until 2018. Historically, on-site groundwater monitoring well MW-4 has had the highest pollutant concentrations.

In 2010, Washington Mutual Bank excavated soil impacted by pollutants. Hydrogen-releasing compound (HRC®) was added to the backfill material to support degradation of residual pollutants and improve groundwater quality.

In 2015, sub-slab soil vapor samples were collected from beneath the adjacent building at 484 Washington Street and contained concentrations of PCE in soil vapor that were above the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (San Francisco Bay) Environmental Screening Levels (ESLs)¹.

From 2016 to 2018, Washington Mutual Bank operated a soil vapor extraction system (SVE) at the site to reduce soil vapor impacts on-site and off-site beneath the adjacent building and to improve groundwater quality. The SVE system was shut down and rebound testing was performed in 2018 and 2019. Confirmation samples were collected in 2020 from all on-site and off-site soil vapor probes, including soil vapor probes located inside the adjacent building. Since shutdown of the system in 2018, all soil vapor results have been below laboratory reporting limits and commercial and residential risk-based ESLs.

In 2020, post-remediation groundwater samples indicated that pollutants in groundwater monitoring wells MW-1, MW-2, MW-3, and MW-5 were below laboratory reporting limits and maximum contaminant levels (MCLs)². Groundwater samples collected from well MW-4 had a concentration of PCE at the laboratory reporting limit of 1 micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g/L}$) but below the MCL of 5 $\mu\text{g/L}$. Trichloroethene and cis-1,2-dichloroethene were detected at 6.5 $\mu\text{g/L}$ and 37 $\mu\text{g/L}$, respectively, which are above the respective MCLs of 5 $\mu\text{g/L}$ and 6 $\mu\text{g/L}$.

In 2020, the Central Coast Water Board determined that case closure with a deed restriction limiting site use to commercial and industrial uses was warranted based on site conditions and the completed remedial effort.

¹ San Francisco Bay ESLs are considered conservative levels because the presence of a chemical at concentrations exceeding an ESL does not necessarily indicate adverse effects on human health or the environment, rather that additional evaluation and/or cleanup is warranted. More information about San Francisco Bay ESLs is available at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water_issues/programs/esl.html

² MCL – the highest level of a pollutant that is allowed in drinking water and is established by the State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water and/or USEPA.

The impacted groundwater at this site has never been used to supply drinking water. Businesses and homes near the site receive drinking water from the Monterey County Public Water System.

Rationale for Closure

Central Coast Water Board staff recommends closure of this case based on:

1. The extent of contaminants in soil, soil vapor, and groundwater has been adequately characterized.
2. Concentrations of contaminants in groundwater have decreased over time to concentrations below or nearly below drinking water standards. Residual concentrations pollutants in groundwater are expected to naturally attenuate over time to concentrations below drinking water standards.
3. Concentrations in soil vapor have been reduced to below laboratory reporting levels and environmental screening limits and indicate that there is no vapor intrusion of contaminants.

Based on the available monitoring results and remediation efforts conducted, Central Coast Water Board staff finds that there is no significant threat to groundwater resources, human health, or the environment from any residual contamination remaining at the site. No further groundwater monitoring, investigation, or cleanup is necessary for the site, based on evaluation of existing data and information.

Public Comment Period

The public has 30 days to comment on the proposed case closure and copies of the site investigation and remediation reports are available under the "Site Maps/Documents" tab on the GeoTracker website:

<http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/?gid=T0605397777>

This notice is provided for your review and comment. A copy of a draft case closure summary form for this site is available on the State Water Resources Control Board's GeoTracker web page at:

https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/view_documents?global_id=T0605397777&enforcement_id=6463830

If you would like more information or wish to comment on the information provided, please contact Ms. Amber Sellinger at the Central Coast Water Board. All interested parties are required to submit their comments to the Central Coast Water Board in writing (by email or letter) on or before **May 27, 2021** to be considered.

Comments should be sent to:

Ms. Amber Sellinger
Central Coast Water Board
895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
(805) 549-3866

Email: Amber.Sellinger@waterboards.ca.gov

If you would like to receive future correspondence on this cleanup site, please contact Ms. Sellinger and request to be added to the interested parties' mailing list for this Site.

