FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE     Contact: Brian Newman
August 5, 2005               (916) 464-4834

WATER BOARD ORDERS CONTRA COSTA COUNTY GAS STATION TO PAY
$50,000 FOR POLLUTING GROUNDWATER

Sacramento – The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
today issued a penalty of $50,000 against Abdul Ghafoor, owner, and
Rajbir Sarkaria, operator, of the former Gas for Less Station in Antioch.

The owners allegedly failed to comply with Water Board orders to report on
the investigation and cleanup of gasoline discharges to soil and
groundwater from three leaking underground storage tanks.

“When we issue an order, dischargers need to be aware that it is a very
serious step and it is important that the Regional Board follow up on
noncompliance to maintain the integrity of the underground tank and
other Board programs for all involved,” said Bob Schneider, Chairman of
the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board.

“We have not seen any action at all in this very serious matter, even where
funds have been available to further this cleanup. As such a $50,000
administrative civil liability for this case is a minimum, and if we don’t see
compliance in the near future we’ll be back,” Schneider said.

When Contra Costa County Environmental Health officials removed three
tanks of gasoline, staff saw holes in the tanks and found that gasoline had
leaked into the soil under the tanks. Shallow groundwater has been
polluted with high concentrations of petroleum hydrocarbons, including
benzene, a known carcinogen, according to a preliminary investigation.

The polluted groundwater underlies the service station at 924 West 10th
Street and extends off-site.

# # # # #