



Enforcement News

Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board
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Santa Ana Water Board Approves Clean-Up Order, Settlement Agreement Over TCE Plume in Ontario

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RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board has adopted a settlement agreement and cleanup and abatement order for the remediation of a trichloroethylene (TCE) groundwater plume in Ontario, Calif., that has affected the groundwater supplies of area residents.

The cleanup order was issued to the cities of Ontario and Upland, as well as the Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA), Aerojet Rocketdyne Inc., The Boeing Company, General Electric Company, Lockheed Martin and the United States Department of Defense. The parties worked together under the Santa Ana Water Board's oversight to reach an agreement that addresses cleaning up the TCE plume, while continuing to supply replacement drinking water to residents whose private wells have been impacted.

"We required the multiple parties to get involved in addressing this problem while the Board actively oversaw their progress," said Kurt Berchtold, executive officer for the Santa Ana Water Board. "All parties moved beyond assigning blame for the plume and have developed an effective solution that is in the best interest of the public."

Trichloroethylene is a volatile organic compound that was widely used as an industrial degreasing and cleaning solvent starting in the mid-1940s. The use of TCE declined in the 1970s after environmental and economic concerns curtailed its use.

According to the Order, Ontario and Upland will take over providing an alternative water supply to affected residents, and IEUA will implement cleanup of the plume, which is located west of Interstate 15 and south of State Route 60 in Ontario. The remedy includes a collaborative effort between the public parties and the Chino Basin Desalter Authority (CDA) that leverages CDA's planned expansion project. The companies – operating as ABGL, LLC – performed the earlier plume investigation and voluntarily initiated the replacement water supply program.

The parties said they were pleased to work with the Santa Ana Water Board and the community on the cleanup, and they will continue to supply drinking water to residents in the affected area.

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