



Enforcement News

Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Consultant GSA Engineering Settles with State over Fraud Allegations *Case Related to Cal Tech Environmental Laboratories Felony Conviction*

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SACRAMENTO – The State Water Resources Control Board announced a settlement today with GSA Engineering Inc. (GSA) over allegations that it submitted inflated invoices to the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund and made kickback payments to a laboratory that conspired to falsify reports.

“Reimbursement of actual costs and submittal of reliable analytical data are essential to our Cleanup Fund program,” said Yvonne West, director of the Office of Enforcement. “The Office of Enforcement will vigorously investigate and prosecute unscrupulous firms and individuals who falsify or otherwise compromise documents and data for financial gains.”

The State Water Board alleged that GSA, an environmental consulting firm based in Pacific Palisade, made misrepresentations with reimbursement requests that included hidden kickback payments in padded laboratory invoices and directed the laboratory to revise results to an expected value rather than resample and rerun questionable results. The laboratory was Paramount-based Cal Tech Environmental Laboratories, LLC and its owner, Mr. Roobik Yaghoubi. Yaghoubi [pleaded guilty](#) to a felony false data charge in Los Angeles County (Case No. BA450757) in November 2017.

As part of the February 2019 settlement between GSA and the State Water Board, GSA will pay a \$90,000 penalty, and the company and its principal, Daniel Louks, will be disqualified from participating in any State Water Board reimbursement program, including the Cleanup Fund.

For more information on the State Water Board’s efforts to prevent, investigate and prosecute cases of fraud, waste and/or abuse against the Cleanup Fund, see the [fact sheet](#). The State Water Board maintains an online [list of disqualified businesses and persons](#) banned from working for the State of California.

The Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund provides a means for petroleum UST owners and operators to meet the federal and state requirements of maintaining financial responsibility to pay for any damages arising from their tank operations. The Fund assists a large number of small businesses and individuals by providing reimbursement for expenses associated with the





cleanup of leaking USTs. The Fund also provides money to the Regional Water Boards and local regulatory agencies to abate emergency situations or to cleanup abandoned sites that pose a threat to human health, safety, and the environment, as a result of a UST petroleum release.

Suspected fraud, waste and/or abuse against the Cleanup Fund can be reported by email to reportfraud@waterboards.ca.gov, by toll-free message line (1-855-263-0863) or by mailing or faxing a [Fraud Reporting Complaint Form](#) to the State Water Board:

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