

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

4 August 2025

PUBLIC NOTICE

CASE CLOSURE CONSIDERATION, UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK RELEASE, FORMER JOHNSON'S AUTO & TRACTOR, 10958 14TH AVENUE, ARMONA, KINGS COUNTY, RB CASE 5T16000104, OSCF PROJECT NO. B311

This letter is to inform interested parties of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) consideration of closing the subject case (Site), and to request comments from interested parties.

The Former Johnson's Auto & Tractor (Site) is on the northwest corner of 14th Avenue and Walnut Street in the town of Armona, Kings County. The property is identified as Kings County Assessor's Parcel Number 917-050-021-000. The Site is developed with a commercial building with asphalt and concrete paving. Motor fuel was formerly dispensed from an underground storage tank (UST) system with two 1,000-gallon USTs with vehicle repairs conducted in the building. Potable water is provided to the Site by the Armona Community Services District water system.

A release from the UST system was discovered by soil investigation in 1990. Total volatile hydrocarbons (TVH) were detected in samples from two borings at concentrations of up to 36,000 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg) with benzene detected to 150 mg/kg. Toluene, ethylbenzene and xylenes were also detected. The USTs, product piping and fuel dispensers were removed during 1992 and surrounding soil was excavated to approximately 9 feet below ground surface (bgs) prior to backfilling the excavation. Additional investigation or cleanup was not conducted.

Four soil borings were advanced to approximately 30 feet bgs during March 2025. Borings were located at the former USTs; the north end of the former fuel dispenser island; west of the former USTs; and south of the Site in Walnut Street. Soil samples were collected from each boring at 2.5 and 7.5 feet bgs and at 5-foot intervals to the bottom of the borings. Groundwater samples were collected from temporary monitoring wells installed in the borings.

Soil and groundwater samples were analyzed by a California accredited hazardous waste laboratory. Analysis included total petroleum hydrocarbons as gasoline (TPHg) and full scan volatile organic compounds (VOCs), including benzene, ethylbenzene, toluene and xylenes (BTEX), fuel oxygenates and naphthalene by EPA Method 8260B; and total lead by EPA Method 6010B.

NICHOLAS AVDIS, CHAIR | PATRICK PULUPA, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

GRO, BTEX, fuel oxygenates and naphthalene were not detected in the soil samples, except for trace concentrations of BTEX of less than 0.1 milligram per kilogram (mg/kg) in one sample at 2.5 feet bgs.

Depth to groundwater in the borings was approximately 24 feet bgs. GRO, BTEX and naphthalene were not detected in groundwater samples collected from the borings. The fuel oxygenate methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE) was detected in one sample at 3.3 micrograms-per-liter, less than Drinking Water Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs), and may be from a different source.

Soil vapor samples were collected during March 2025 from vapor probes north of the former USTs and adjacent to the Site building, with only low concentrations of benzene and ethylbenzene detected. The chlorinated solvent tetrachloroethene (PCE) was also detected but is not related to the UST release.

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) adopted the *Low-Threat Underground Storage Tank Case Closure Policy* (Policy). This case was evaluated for closure based on the evidence presented in the investigation report and meets the relevant case closure criteria based on the fundamental principles contained in the Policy.

There should be no risk to human health and safety or the environment from the remaining petroleum product constituents, which are expected to degrade naturally. Groundwater quality was not significantly affected. Active supply wells and surface water bodies were not identified within 1,000 feet of the Site.

This Public Notice has been transmitted to the interested parties in the Site vicinity and relevant agencies, as well as posted on the [Central Valley Water Board website](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/public_notices/) available at (http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/public_notices/) Underground Storage Tank – Decisions Pending, Case Closures. Details of the assessment are also available to interested parties through the State Water Board's [GeoTracker](http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/) website: (<http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>).

You may participate in the case closure process by reviewing reports, asking questions, and providing comments on the proposed closure. The Central Valley Water Board's case number is 5T16000104.

Please submit any comments regarding the proposed case closure to the Central Valley Water Board's Fresno office by **2 October 2025**.

Interested parties with questions or comments regarding the Site or the proposed actions should contact the case worker, John Whiting at 1685 E Street, in Fresno at (559) 445-5504, or by email at John.Whiting@waterboards.ca.gov. Upon completion of the public comment period, and in the absence of any substantive comments against closure, the Central Valley Water Board staff will direct that soil vapor sampling probes be properly destroyed, and any remaining investigation derived waste be removed and properly managed. If no problems are discovered during a final Site inspection a case closure letter will be prepared.