

Prior to July 1, 2013, the City of Santa Monica, specifically the Santa Monica Fire Department (SMFD), was the lead agency responsible for implementation of the cleanup, abatement, or other corrective action necessary to remedy the effects of a release of hazardous substances from an underground storage tank. As lead agency exercising oversight of the release at the subject location (1637 19th St., Santa Monica), the SMFD had determined that residual contamination with a maximum concentration of 22,000 parts per million (ppm) of Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons (TPH) as diesel detected at 20 feet below ground surface (bgs) and confirmed non-detect at 65 feet bgs and 2900 ppm of TPH as gasoline detected at 40 feet bgs and confirmed non-detect at 75 feet bgs did not pose a significant risk to public health or the environment. While not directed by the SMFD, the City had no objection to the preparation of a Human Health Risk Assessment (HRA) to support leaving contaminated soil in place. The findings of the HRA confirmed results for benzene that exceeded the soil-gas screening numbers in both residential and commercial/industrial scenarios below buildings. While the City accepted the HRA to support closure as it applied to the current property and land use, it was important that the City reserve the right to issue additional orders in the event site conditions change. In an effort to provide clarity in documenting and obtaining acknowledgement as to the conditions for closure applying only the current property and land use, the City considered a deed restriction placed on the property. Because the property owner did not accept these conditions, the City did not issue site closure. Effective July 1, 2013, all open cases were referred to the State Water Resources Control Board.

While site conditions meet the criteria specified in the Low-Threat Underground Storage Tank Case Closure Policy today, the program does not consider future excavation and/or development of contaminated sites subject to corrective action under the oversight of a certified program. The restriction was an effort to manage activities at sites with confirmed contamination in the future. If you have any questions, I may be reached at the address/phone listed below. Thank you for your consideration.

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