



Department of
Toxic Substances
Control

*The Mission of the
Department of
Toxic Substances
Control is to
provide the highest
level of safety, and
to protect public
health and the
environment from
toxic harm.*



State of California



California
Environmental
Protection Agency

Fact Sheet, October 2009

Update on the Phase I Closure of the former Romic facility in East Palo Alto

Introduction

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has completed its oversight of the field activities as part of the Final Closure (Phase I) at the former Romic Environmental Technologies Corporation (Romic) facility, 2081 Bay Road in East Palo Alto. [Please see the map on page two.](#) All of the above-ground equipment and tanks used in hazardous waste management at the facility have been decontaminated, before they were sold or recycled as scrap metal. The four hazardous waste storage buildings that were on-site have also been decontaminated and demolished.

This Fact Sheet provides a brief summary of:

- History and Operations at the Site
- Closure Activities
- Site Safety & Community Protection During Closure
- Next Steps
- Where to Find Documents and who to contact for information.

History and Operations at site

Romic began operating at the site in 1964. Operations included solvent recycling, fuel blending, wastewater treatment and hazardous waste treatment and storage. The facility operated with a hazardous waste permit from DTSC. In 2005, DTSC was processing the renewal of Romic's Permit but due to a poor compliance record, DTSC ordered Romic to shut down. On August 29, 2007, DTSC issued a Stipulation and Order to Romic which specified that Romic stop operations, eliminate inventory and submit a revised draft final Closure Plan to close and disassemble their facility.

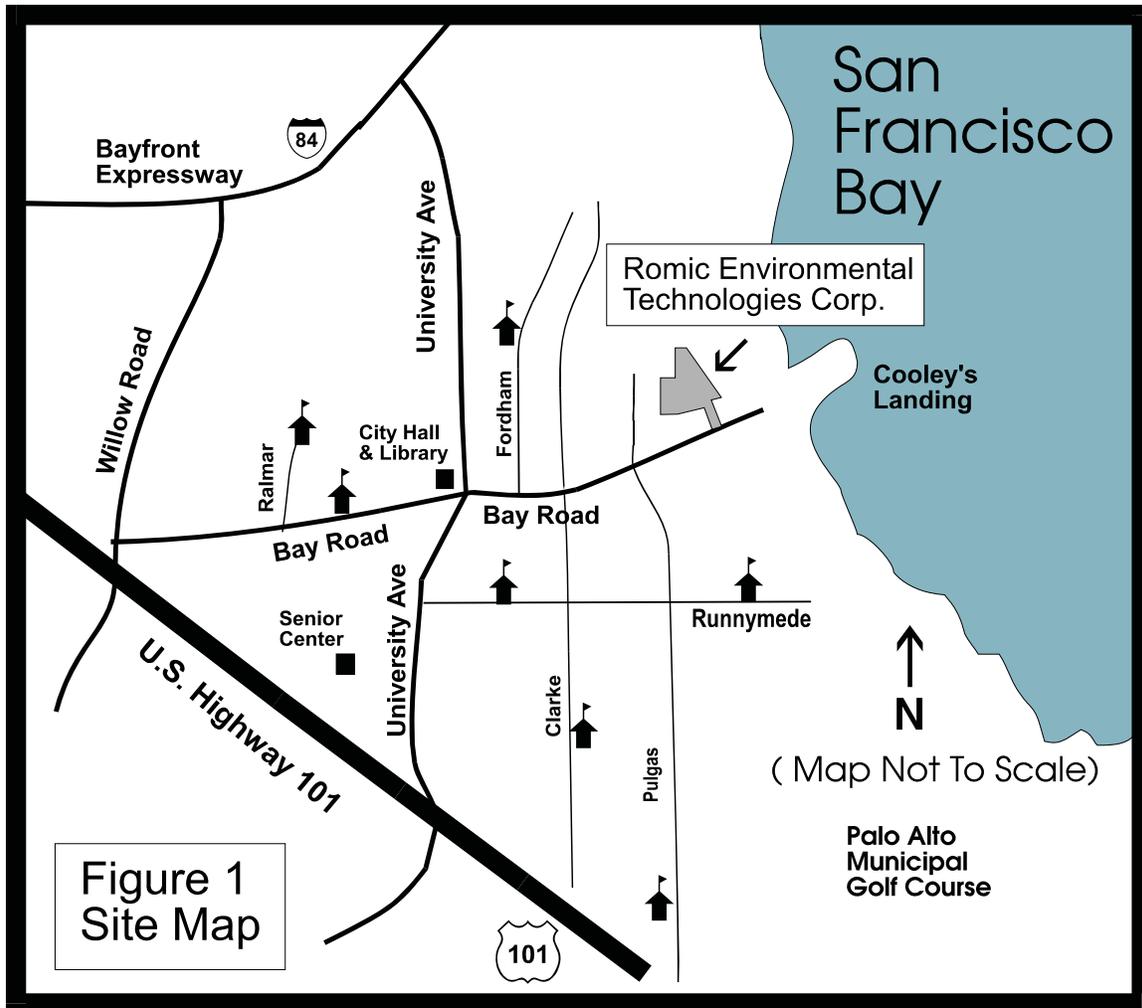
Closure Activities

Closure activities involved decontamination, disassembly and disposal. All tanks, equipment and structures were decontaminated in place, on-site at Romic. Before decontamination began, each unit was visually inspected and then vacuumed for vapors. The equipment was then subjected to high-pressure wash to remove all residues. Any stains and caked residues were sprayed and/or soaked with a low surfactant or industrial soap; followed by a high-pressure wash. The final rinse water was collected for decontamination confirmation sampling. If a



confirmation sample for any unit failed to meet the decontamination performance standards, Romic could choose to repeat the decontamination process or cut it up and dispose it as hazardous waste.

The concrete pads and the secondary containment areas were the last to be decontaminated. The final rinse water for each of these was sampled and analyzed to confirm that decontamination met the necessary decontamination performance standard. The wash water from all of the decontamination activities along with the rainwater collected during



Out of the 107 tanks, only two tanks had to be sampled twice and one tank was sampled three times. None of the equipment had to be resampled during the decontamination process. Romic sold 47 of the tanks as well as 34 out of 55 units of the equipment used on site. Before any item was sold, Romic made sure that the confirmation sample met the decontamination performance standards in the DTSC approved Closure Plan. Romic and their contractors recycled the remaining 59 tanks and 21 units of equipment as scrap metal. Of all the tanks and equipment decontaminated, only one tank (TW-1) had to be disposed of as hazardous waste.

closure activities was treated on-site and shipped off to a permitted disposal site. All of the concrete has been left in place to act as a protective barrier.

Please see the pictures on page three which illustrate the change that has taken place at this former Romic facility.



Before Phase 1 began on December 15, 2008



After Phase 1 finished on September 29, 2009

Site Safety and Community Protection during Closure

DTSC required Romic to employ most stringent methods to control dust although all of the hazardous waste storage buildings at the project site are steel framed and pose much lower potential for dust generation as would concrete sided structures. They used water to wet all debris both during and immediately after demolition activities. Romic's contractors also used particulate monitoring equipment for real time verification of low dust levels during demolition activities.

For the safety of the on-site workers, the interior of each tank and equipment was first screened with a handheld detector to detect interior vapor concentrations (if any). In addition, workers underwent personal air monitoring for entire work day at the beginning of the project to establish that the protective equipment was adequate. Fenceline air monitoring was conducted to detect potential off-site migration of contaminants during closure activities and to take immediate actions to protect

air quality, if necessary. Noise generated during these activities was within the decibel levels in East Palo Alto's Municipal Code. All closure activities were performed during the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Next Steps

DTSC will receive the Phase I Closure Completion Report later this month. After DTSC reviews and approves the Report, U.S. EPA will take over the site and begin Phase II --the cleanup process. Phase II will begin with U.S. EPA investigating the sub-surface to determine the nature and extent of contamination below ground surface. U. S. EPA will also oversee any further actions to clean up the groundwater and soil. For more information, please contact:

Ron Leach
U.S. EPA Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street, WST-5
San Francisco CA 94105
(415) 972-3362 or leach.ronald@epa.gov

Where to Find the Documents

All reports and other related documents for the former Romic facility are available for review at the following locations:

East Palo Alto Branch Library
Reference Desk
2415 University Avenue
East Palo Alto, California 94303
Please call (650) 321-7712 for information on hours.

Department of Toxic Substances Control
Berkeley office
700 Heinz Avenue, Suite 200
Berkeley, CA 94710

To make necessary arrangements, please contact Ms. Lule Varela at (510) 540-3800
Hours: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday – Thursday for the first three weeks of every month.

Site documents and weekly reports are also available at <http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/>. Please type in East Palo Alto for the name of the city and click on “get report”. Click on “report” for Romic. Please choose what documents you wish to review. A computer is available in the DTSC file room for your use.

Weekly progress reports are also available at the East Palo Alto Senior Center, 560 Bell Street, East Palo Alto. The Senior Center’s telephone number is (650) 329-5900.

Who to Contact for Information

If you have any questions about the project or cleanup activities, please contact:

Suhasini Patel
DTSC Project Manager
8800 Cal Center Drive
Sacramento CA 95826
(916) 255-6428 or SPatel@dtsc.ca.gov

Nathan Schumacher
DTSC Public Participation Specialist
8800 Cal Center Drive
Sacramento CA 95826
Toll Free at (866) 495-5651 or
NSchumac@dtsc.ca.gov

Media Inquiries:

Carol Northrup
DTSC Public Information Officer
(510) 407-4817 or CNorthru@dtsc.ca.gov

Notice to Hearing-Impaired Individuals

You can obtain additional information about the site by using the California State Relay Service at 1 (888) 877 5378 (TDD). Please ask them to contact Nathan Schumacher at (916) 255-3650 regarding the former Romic facility.