

MONTEREY COUNTY

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH Ray Bullick, Director

ANIMAL SERVICES
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
CLINIC SERVICES

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

PUBLIC HEALTH
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR/PUBLIC GUARDIAN

January 22, 2014

Paul Kewin, Division Chief
Department of Toxic Substances Control
Enforcement and Emergency Response Division
PO Box 806
Sacramento CA 95812-0806

Re: Pfeiffer Ridge Fire response

Dear Mr. Kewin,

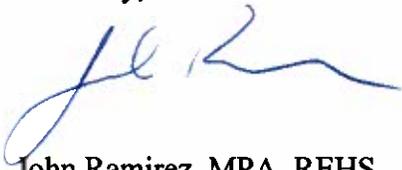
On Sunday afternoon, December 15, 2013, a wildfire broke out in the Pfeiffer Ridge area of Big Sur. Before the fire was controlled and finally extinguished, 34 residences and other structures had been destroyed. This incident severely impacted the lives and livelihood of a significant segment of the Big Sur Community, a particularly close-knit and self-reliant group of Monterey County residents. But in order to cope with this exceptional occurrence, the people of Pfeiffer Ridge needed outside assistance to begin recovery.

Staff-members from several Monterey County agencies were mobilized to assist those whose homes had been damaged or lost. In particular the Environmental Health Bureau was tasked with inspections of the area's drinking water and on-site wastewater treatment systems and infrastructure, as well as monitoring of potentially hazardous materials released to the environment as a result of the fire. Environmental Health Bureau staff requested assistance from the State of California's Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) to assist in the inspection of properties, and especially to provide their expertise in the recognition and removal of hazardous wastes from contaminated burn sites.

DTSC's Adam Palmer coordinated the response, and Nancy McGee, also of DTSC, mobilized contractors (PARC Specialty) and led the DTSC team to the Big Sur area, where they were instrumental in expediting the cleanup and removal of hazardous materials and wastes from damaged residences. By contributing their services, DTSC staff provided especially valuable assistance to the local community during the initial stage of recovery from this devastating fire.

From each member of the staff of Environmental Health Bureau that had the pleasure of working with DTSC staff, please accept our profound thanks and, especially, our gratitude for the hard work and professionalism of Adam Palmer and Nancy McGee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Ramirez', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Ramirez, MPA, REHS
Director Environmental Health Bureau
ramirezj1@co.monterey.ca.us