



**AEROJET-GENERAL CORPORATION  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA**

**DTSC ISSUES FINAL  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT  
DENIES PERMIT MODIFICATION FOR OPEN BURN**

**Fact Sheet**

**February 2000**

**INTRODUCTION**

The California Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has prepared this fact sheet to inform the public of DTSC's certification of the final Focused Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the Aerojet Open Burn Treatment Complex (Open Burn Complex). Based on the FEIR, DTSC has decided to deny the Class 3 Permit Modification request by Aerojet-General Corporation (Aerojet) to modify its hazardous waste facilities permit. This request would have allowed the Open Burn Complex to operate as part of Aerojet's existing Treatment and Storage Consolidated Permit. Aerojet has operated the Open Burn Complex since 1973. It operated under Interim Status, pending a final permit determination.

This fact sheet provides a summary of the FEIR, the Sacramento County Fire District (Fire District) study of alternatives, and the denial of the Permit Modification request. This fact sheet also provides information on DTSC contacts and the information repository.

**RECENT DTSC ACTIONS UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT**

As lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), DTSC had responsibility to review the potential health and environmental risks from the proposed Class 3 Permit Modification for open burning by preparing a FEIR. This FEIR is for a subsequent project (open burn) that was identified in the Master EIR

for Aerojet's Treatment and Storage Consolidated Permit. DTSC approved the Master EIR in March 1997. The FEIR describes the project extensively and characterizes the surrounding existing environment. It also describes how the project may affect the environment and recommends measures that might reduce, mitigate, or eliminate potentially significant environmental impacts. Air quality and ecological risk are two areas for which there are significant environmental impacts that cannot be mitigated, if the Open Burn Complex were permitted to operate at Aerojet.

DTSC held a public scoping meeting for the Focused Environmental Impact Report on November 6, 1997. Comments from this meeting and the accompanying public comment period increased the scope of the environmental review through the Draft Focused EIR (Draft FEIR) process. DTSC held another public meeting on January 26, 1999, as part of the Draft EIR public comment period. During that hearing and public comment period, DTSC received comments on the Draft FEIR. Public comments, agency comments, impacts, and mitigation measures identified in the Draft FEIR led to increased discussion concerning compliance with California Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 41800.

HSC Section 41800 does not allow the open burning of wastes for which there is a feasible alternative means of treatment as determined by the Fire District. As a result, the Fire District completed a study to evaluate available alternative treatments for the Aerojet wastes proposed for open burning.

The Fire District report concluded that there are alternatives for a large portion of the materials that Aerojet has open burned. Many of the materials can be shipped to other off-site facilities. However some Research and Development materials, because of their lack of stability or their unknown characteristics, may still be justified for open burning at Aerojet.

## **BASIS FOR DENIAL**

Air quality and ecological risk are two areas the FEIR identified as having significant and unavoidable impacts. The Open Burn Complex had significant environmental impact to air quality because it exceeded the California PM<sub>10</sub> (particles that are less than ten microns in diameter) standard for a twenty-four hour period and for a yearly period. The Final EIR concludes that the Open Burn Complex would result in more particulate matter entering the air than is acceptable under California law. Also, the Final EIR concludes that the Open Burn Complex has a significant environmental impact to special status amphibian and reptile species. These species include the foothill yellow-legged frog, western spadefoot, California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, and western pond turtle.

When any environmental impact report concludes a project has unavoidable adverse environmental impacts, the project may still be approved if there is sufficient information to justify a Statement of Overriding Considerations. In such a case, the broader benefits -- social or economic -- must outweigh the adverse impacts. In the case of the Aerojet Open Burn Complex, no information has been provided to DTSC that would justify a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

After review of the Fire District's report, and the remaining government agency comments, DTSC certified the FEIR and denied the Class 3 Permit Modification request. DTSC sent a denial letter to Aerojet on February 8, 2000.

Aerojet has the opportunity to submit a new application for a different open burn permit modification at any time. Within thirty days after the denial, Aerojet may appeal the denial. If DTSC decides to review its decision to deny, DTSC will issue a public notice to the Aerojet mailing list and set forth in that notice the schedule for the appeal. If DTSC decides not to review its decision, DTSC will send notice only to Aerojet.

## **INFORMATION REPOSITORY**

The FEIR, the Fire District report on alternatives, and other related documents may be reviewed at the following established repository:

Department of Toxic Substances Control  
10151 Croydon Way, Suite 3  
Sacramento, CA 95827  
Hours: 8:00 am to 4:00 pm (Monday-Friday)  
Contact: Alberta McMurray (916) 255-3758

## **FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

If you have any questions please contact:

Lorraine Larsen-Hallock  
DTSC Project Manager  
(916) 255-3578

Nathan Schumacher  
DTSC Public Participation Specialist  
(916) 255-3650

Notice to Hearing Impaired Individuals:

TDD users can obtain additional information about Aerojet by using the California State Relay Service (1-888-877-5378) and asking to reach Nathan Schumacher at (916) 255-3650