



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY NEWS RELEASE

Department of Toxic Substances Control

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State certifies environmental cleanup at Borello Property in Morgan Hill

Berkeley – The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) today announced completion (certification) of the hazardous substances cleanup at the 14-acre Borello Property in Morgan Hill. The project used a bioremediation technology that enabled cleanup to residential standards within two months at a relatively low cost.

The natural bioremediation process is considered a safe, low impact and effective method of removing pollutants from the environment. The site received an “unrestricted use” certification, the Department’s most rigorous and health-protective standard.

"The success of this cleanup is encouraging," said Acting DTSC Director Leonard Robinson. "Using the best available science to return properties to productive use is a priority for Governor Schwarzenegger's administration. This property, located along Peet Road, was a vacant lot and now can be developed into a residential subdivision," Robinson added.

The Borello Property was historically used as an apricot orchard from the early 1900s through the mid 1990s until it was replaced with a cherry orchard that operated until early September 2004. Environmental investigations at the site found elevated concentrations of the pesticides toxaphene and dieldrin within the initial 1½ feet of soil beneath the entire property.

DTSC and the Borello property owner entered into a voluntary cleanup agreement to remediate the site in late September 2004. Cleanup activities, which occurred at the site from June 2005 to August 2005, included a bioremediation process that helped breakdown harmful chemicals in the pesticides and changed them into non-toxic substances (salt, carbon dioxide and water). In this case, the entire site was bioremediated at depths of 1½ feet.

The Borello property is now a vacant lot, which was recently zoned for residential use. The property owner plans to develop it into a residential subdivision.

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The Department of Toxic Substances Control's mission is to restore, protect, and enhance the environment and ensure public health, environmental quality and economic vitality by regulating hazardous waste, conducting and overseeing cleanups, and developing and promoting pollution prevention.