



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Department of Toxic Substances Control

NEWS RELEASE

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Maureen F. Gorsen, Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL ORDERS ROMIC TO CLOSE AND CLEAN UP EAST PALO ALTO PLANT

SACRAMENTO – The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) announced that it signed a Stipulation and Order requiring Romic Environmental Technologies Corp. to completely close its East Palo Alto hazardous waste storage and treatment facility in accordance with a DTSC approved closure plan. That closure will allow the 14-acre bay front facility to be cleaned up and returned to productive economic use.

“We laid out clear expectations and deadlines for Romic to submit a closure plan for our review to safely close the East Palo Alto plant and clean up the property to acceptable standards,” DTSC Director Maureen F. Gorsen said. “DTSC has constantly monitored the facility’s operations and ultimately found that it could not be operated safely,” Gorsen added.

In signing the DTSC Order that becomes effective today, Romic agrees that the Order and the terms of satisfying it are, “...fair, reasonable, and in the public interest,” as stated in the legally binding document. While settling certain violations, the Order does not restrict DTSC from taking additional enforcement against the company for other violations, including those involved with ongoing investigations into a June 2006 chemical release and employee burn incidents at the East Palo Alto facility,

The Order specifies what DTSC requires for closure of Romic’s East Palo Alto plant, down to the numbers and types of samples needed to prove that equipment and structures are properly decontaminated. Romic must also sample soil, and potentially groundwater for any contamination from its operations or spills at the facility, and prepare plans to clean up contamination found from those samples. The Order does not impose any monetary penalties against the company because DTSC has not yet completed its investigation into additional possible violations of hazardous waste laws.

A draft closure plan for Romic’s East Palo Alto facility will be made available for public comment within the next few months, and DTSC will hold a public hearing. After the draft closure plan is approved, DTSC will oversee the implementation of closure and cleanup

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activities in conjunction with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which is currently overseeing the clean up of contaminated groundwater at the site.

On May 30, DTSC issued an Enforcement Order directing Romic to cease most of the hazardous waste operations at the facility because of the company's history of violations and accidents. This Stipulation and Order issued today resolves DTSC's May 30 Enforcement Order and directs Romic to stop all operations and properly close the East Palo Alto facility.

TIMELINE FOR STIPULATION AND ORDER:

- 1. Within 30 days, Romic must notify DTSC in writing of their intent to commence final closure.**
- 2. Romic may no longer accept any offsite-generated hazardous waste.**
- 3. Romic must cease all treatment activities associated with the receipt of offsite-generated hazardous waste.**
- 4. Within 45 days, any offsite-generated bulk or containerized hazardous waste which has not been treated or is in the process of treatment or storage shall be sent offsite.**
- 5. Within 60 days, Romic must submit a revised closure plan. (This Closure plan will be public noticed and subjected to CEQA.)**
- 6. Within 30 days of DTSC's approval of the revised closure plan, Romic must begin closure activities.**
- 7. Within 360 days from DTSC's approval of the revised closure plan, Romic must submit a closure completion report and certification to DTSC. At the same time the company must submit a notice of intent to withdraw the permit renewal application that was public noticed by DTSC from May 31, 2005 through September 28, 2005.**

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FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES: Contact the Department of Toxic Substances Control by phone at (800) 728-6942 or visit www.dtsc.ca.gov. To report illegal handling, discharge, or disposal of hazardous waste, call the Waste Alert Hotline at (800) 698-6942.

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.