

Fact Sheet  
September  
2002

# State Investigates Former Battery Recycler in Southwest Fresno

FRESNO CALIFORNIA

*DTSC is one of six Boards and Departments within the California Environmental Protection Agency. The Department's mission is to restore, protect and enhance the environment, to ensure public health, environmental quality and economic vitality, by regulating hazardous waste, conducting and overseeing cleanups, and developing and promoting pollution prevention.*

State of California



California  
Environmental  
Protection Agency



## Introduction

This fact sheet gives you information about 1403 East Jensen Avenue and the Department of Toxic Substances Control's (DTSC) plans for further investigation at this address. 1403 East Jensen Avenue was the location for operations of Fresno Battery Exchange (FBE) on approximately one acre of an 8  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre piece of land in Southwest Fresno. Fresno County has zoned the property agricultural residential and local residents have established a garden on a large portion of the property. FBE operated from 1960 to 1978. During that period, FBE conducted an automobile battery recycling business that resulted in the contamination of soil with hazardous concentrations of **lead**. Residences are within 100 feet of the site. Terms in **bold italics** are defined in the glossary.

This fact sheet outlines what has already been found at 1403 East Jensen Avenue and how DTSC plans to further investigate the site. Also included are DTSC staff contacts for further information as well as a community survey. DTSC encourages you to fill out the survey letting DTSC know what you think about this site. DTSC will use the survey to plan further public involvement activities for 1403 East Jensen Avenue.

DTSC wants your thoughts and ideas about this site. Attached to this fact sheet is a survey. Please take time to read the fact sheet and answer the survey. After you answer it, please return it to: Nathan Schumacher, DTSC, 8800 Cal Center Drive, Sacramento CA 95826

## History

Fresno County Department of Community Health, in August 2000, sent a letter to the property owners informing them of the elevated blood lead levels in tenant children residing at a house located on the site. Fresno County referred 1403 Jensen Avenue to DTSC for further investigation. DTSC sampling found lead in the well that supplies drinking water to 1403 Jensen Avenue in October 2000. Also, DTSC took soil samples in October 2000 and found concentrations of lead in surface soil ranging from 634 **parts per million** to as high as 67,800 parts per million. The soil samples were taken inside the fenced back yard of the house at

*The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our website at [www.dtsc.ca.gov](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov).*

1403 Jensen Avenue. These lead concentrations exceed the *action levels* used by DTSC and the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

## Present and Future DTSC Activities

DTSC has hired a contractor to investigate the amount and extent of soil and *groundwater* contamination present at the site. In June 2002, DTSC sampled the soil and crops growing inside the fenced back yard of the house at 1403 Jensen Avenue. DTSC found high levels of lead in these crops. Based on these sample results, DTSC constructed a new fence around the entire house. Also DTSC destroyed the back yard crops and continues to control access to the fenced property.

In June and July, 2002, DTSC collected and analyzed soil and garden crop samples from outside the fenced house and yard. Samples showed lead at below action levels in both the crop and soil samples. As a result, any harvested garden crops are fine for human consumption.

DTSC plans to locate all the drinking water wells in the area. Further, DTSC plans to put in at least three monitoring wells to find whether groundwater contamination exists underneath 1403 Jensen Avenue. Based on the soil and groundwater sample results, DTSC will prepare a report on the investigation called a Remedial Investigation Report (RI Report).

You will have a chance to look over the RI Report. DTSC will place all major site reports in a local public building for residents and other interested people to review at their convenience. If you have a preferred location where you would like to review these reports, please mention your preference on the enclosed survey.

## DTSC Contacts and Future Community Involvement

As necessary, DTSC will send out further fact sheets. Based on the surveys, DTSC will also write up a plan for further communication with the neighborhood about this site.

For information about this site please contact either:

Nathan Schumacher  
Public Participation Specialist  
DTSC  
8800 Cal Center Drive  
Sacramento CA 95826  
(916) 255-3650  
[Nschumac@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:Nschumac@dtsc.ca.gov)

Or

Calden Koehn  
Project Manager  
DTSC  
1515 Tollhouse Road  
Clovis CA 93611  
(559) 297-3937  
[Ckoehn@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:Ckoehn@dtsc.ca.gov)  
Media, please contact Ron Baker at  
916-324-3142

## Glossary

**Action levels** -- The guideline established by the environmental protection agencies which identifies the concentration of a substance in a particular media (water, soil, etc.) that may present a health risk when exceeded. If contamination is found in concentrations above the action level, measures must be taken to decrease the concentrations of contamination.

**Groundwater** -- Water beneath the earth's surface that moves slowly through the spaces between soil and rock particles, and serves as the source of drinking water in the Fresno area. A layer of water-bearing soil or rock is called an aquifer.

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## Glossary

**Lead**— A heavy metal of a dull grayish color that is present in trace amounts in the human environment. Lead can get into the body from drinking lead contaminated water, eating vegetables grown in lead contaminated soil, or breathing or ingesting dust when children play or adults work in lead contaminated areas. Lead can cause damage to the nervous system or blood cells if present in the body. Children are at highest risk from exposure to lead contamination because their bodies are still developing. Lead is listed as a reproductive toxic substance for women and men under California’s Proposition 65.

**Parts Per Million (PPM)** — A unit of measurement roughly equivalent to one drop of liquid in a filled gas tank of a full-sized car.

### Mailing List Coupon

If your name and address is on the mailing label, then you are on the mailing list for Fresno Battery Exchange. If not, and you wish to be added to the mailing list, please fill out this coupon and send it to Nathan Schumacher, DTSC, 8800 Cal Center Drive, Sacramento, CA 95826.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

DTSC mailing lists are solely for the purpose of keeping persons informed of DTSC activities. Mailing lists are not routinely released to outside parties. However, they are considered public records and, if requested, may be subject to release.

**Notice to Hearing Impaired Individuals:**

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