

# COMMUNITY UPDATE

The mission of DTSC is to protect California's people and environment from harmful effects of toxic substances by restoring contaminated resources, enforcing hazardous waste laws, reducing hazardous waste generation, and encouraging the manufacture of chemically safer products.

## Former PG&E Zone 1 Substation Operable Unit 2 Site Draft RAW Available for Review: May 30 – June 28, 2018



### Public Comment Period



**May 30 – June 28, 2018**

DTSC invites you to review and comment on the draft RAW and related California Environmental Quality Act Notice of Exemption for the former PG&E Zone 1 Substation Operable Unit 2 Site. All comments must be mailed or emailed by Thursday, June 28, 2018 to:

**Jeff Gymer, DTSC Project Manager**

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**(559) 297-3907**

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The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) invites you to review and comment on a proposed cleanup plan for the property adjacent to the former PG&E Zone 1 Substation parcel, referred to as Operable Unit 2 (OU-2), located at 265 Pacific Street, San Luis Obispo, California 93401 (Site). The cleanup plan, called a draft Removal Action Workplan (draft RAW), proposes preserving the existing asphalt parking lot and commercial building as a protective cover or cap over soil containing polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), arsenic and lead in the top five feet of soil. If the draft RAW is approved, DTSC will enact a Land Use Covenant for the Site to address remaining soil impacts at the site, an Operations and Maintenance Agreement with Pacific Gas and Electric Company



(PG&E) to maintain the protective cap, and a Soil Management Plan that describes how to safely handle soil in the event it is disturbed during future activities.

### Site Location and History

PG&E purchased the approximate 0.2-acre vacant property in 2015. Located in a mixed commercial and residential area, the site is bounded by paved streets, concrete sidewalks, commercial properties and the former PG&E Zone 1 Substation. The property consists of a single-story commercial cinder block building and asphalt-paved parking lot. The City of San Luis Obispo has zoned the site for storing, transportation, wholesaling and certain retail and business services that may be less appropriate in the City's other commercial zones.

The site was originally part of the San Luis Lumber Yard Planing Mill from 1888 to circa 1891. After that the property was either vacant or occupied with small buildings or structures and used for the storage of materials. From 1950 to approximately 1962, PG&E used the site as a pole storage yard to support the adjacent former substation. In 1965, the current building and parking lot were present. Since then the site has been used for a variety of commercial businesses, including a pool supply business, a music school and recording studio, and a drapery shop.

### Environmental Investigations

PG&E conducted soil investigations at the site in 2011 and a soil and soil gas (air in between soil particles) investigation in 2017. These investigations found varying levels of PAHs, total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and metals such as arsenic and lead in the upper five feet of soil. Groundwater ranges from approximately 14 to 55 feet below the ground surface. Since shallow soil impacts were only found at the site, groundwater investigations were not warranted for this project.

In addition to investigation work at the site, PG&E has completed remediation activities at two adjacent properties – the Former PG&E Zone 1 Substation Operable Unit 1 located at 251 Pacific Street and the former Manufactured Gas Plant property located south of the site across the alley at 1390 Walker Street and 280-290 Pismo Street. This work removed contamination in soil, soil gas and groundwater at those locations.

A Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) found that current site conditions do not present a risk to nearby off-site workers, future on-site workers, the surrounding community or the environment. The proposed draft RAW will achieve long-term protection of human health and the environment, and allow for future commercial use at the site.

### What Can Be Done to Clean It Up?

The draft RAW summarizes the nature and extent of soil and soil gas contamination. It develops and evaluates three alternatives to remediate the site using the following criteria: effectiveness, feasibility, regulatory and public acceptance, overall protection of human health and the environment, and cost. The following summarizes the alternatives reviewed for this project.

**Alternative 1: No action** - The Site would be left in its current condition under this alternative. It serves as a baseline against which to compare other alternatives.



**Alternative 2: Containment with Institutional Controls** – Under this alternative, the existing building and asphalt parking lot would be maintained as a cap or protective cover over existing soil contamination. Institutional controls, in the form of a deed restriction, would be implemented to limit certain land uses and prohibit certain current and future activities. DTSC would require routine cap inspections and maintenance as part of an Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Plan with the property owner, and enact a Soil Management Plan detailing how to handle soils in the event that they are disturbed in the future (e.g., construction activities, utility installation work, etc.).

**Alternative 3: Excavation and Off-site Disposal** – With this alternative, contaminated soils up to five feet below the ground throughout the parking lot would be removed and disposed of off-site. Excavations would be backfilled with clean, imported fill and the parking lot would be repaved. A deed restriction, routine cap inspections and maintenance, and a soil management plan would be required for areas where contamination remains in inaccessible areas such as underneath the building foundation.

### **Recommended Alternative**

Based on an evaluation of the alternatives, Alternative 2 is recommended for the site. This alternative offers long-term protection of human health and the environment, without causing any disruption to the community and short-term impacts to the environment. It also leaves the site ready for use by the community under current City zoning.

If DTSC approves the draft RAW, the following activities would address soil contamination:

- Preserving the existing asphalt parking lot and commercial building as a cap over impacted soil;
- Establishing a Land Use Covenant in the form of a deed restriction and O&M Plan for the site to limit certain land uses, prohibit changes to the building or parking lot area without DTSC involvement/approval and describe annual cap inspection and reporting requirements; and
- Establishing a Soil Management Plan that describes the safe handling and disposal of contaminated soils should they be disturbed during any future work.

As part of the O&M Plan, the property owner would be required to visually inspect the asphalt pavement and building annually to ensure the cap is intact. The property owner would report to DTSC the inspection and any required maintenance activities conducted to keep the cap intact to ensure the site remains protective of human health and the environment.

Should the draft RAW be approved, the Land Use Covenant, O&M Plan and Soil Management Plan would be prepared and approved by DTSC by spring 2019. The Land Use Covenant would be recorded with the County of San Luis Obispo so that it runs with the property in perpetuity.

### **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**

As the lead agency under CEQA, DTSC has prepared a Notice of Exemption having determined that the proposed remediation project has no potential for significant impacts on the environment. The draft Notice of Exemption is available for review and comment along with the draft RAW during the public comment period.



### What Happens Next?

At the end of the comment period, DTSC will evaluate all public comments received and make any necessary changes to the draft RAW before making a final decision. We will prepare and send a Responsiveness Summary document to all who commented and make it available in the information repositories listed below.

### Information Repositories

The draft RAW, CEQA documents and other Site-related documents are available to review at the following locations:

San Luis Obispo Library – Reference Desk  
995 Palm Street  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401  
(805) 781-5989  
Hours: 10 a.m. – 7 p.m., Monday – Thursday  
10 a.m. – 5 p.m., Friday – Saturday

DTSC – File Room  
1515 Tollhouse Road  
Clovis, CA 93611  
(559) 297-3901 – call for an appointment

You can also view the copies of key technical reports, fact sheets and other site-related information on DTSC's EnviroStor database at: <http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/> (under "Tools" select "Site/Facility Search," enter "40490013" in the "Site Code" field and click "Report" for the "PG&E, Zone 1 Substation" site).

### Contact Information

For more information about the cleanup process or related documents, contact:

- Jeff Gymer, DTSC Project Manager, (559) 297-3907 or [Jeff.Gymer@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:Jeff.Gymer@dtsc.ca.gov)
- Manuel Lopez, DTSC Public Participation Specialist, (818) 717-6572 or [Manuel.Lopez@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:Manuel.Lopez@dtsc.ca.gov)

For media requests, contact:

- Barbara Zumwalt, DTSC Public Information Officer, (916) 445-2964 or [Barbara.Zumwalt@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:Barbara.Zumwalt@dtsc.ca.gov)

