



Spotlight on DTSC

Cleanup of Hollister Gas Site Could Begin in 2013

The site is small, but the cleanup will be mighty.

An estimated 325 truckloads of soil contaminated with petroleum hydrocarbons, metal and other toxic materials will be carted away from a former manufactured gas plant near downtown [Hollister](#) that is now a Pacific Gas & Electric service center. Clean fill will then be brought in to restore the site.

The state [Department of Toxic Substances Control](#) is directing the cleanup of the 1.2-acre, block-long site near Sixth and Sally streets. The property has a long history – stretching back to 1886, when Hollister Gas Company began operating a plant there.

The facility ran until 1935, and produced gas for the lighting, cooking and heating needs of residents. The plant was largely dismantled by 1943, although an L-shaped building had been constructed on the south end. PG&E acquired the site in 1954 for use as a service center and storage facility.

The [manufactured gas process](#) wasn't particularly clean. It involved heating coal or oil in a generator or oven to produce combustible fuel gas, which was purified, stored in large tanks and distributed to customers. The process typically produced byproducts, such as tar, light oils, sludge, a fine soot called "[lampblack](#)" (also known as carbon black) and other material.

An underground gasoline storage tank was removed in 1988, and investigation by PG&E found contaminants down to 50 feet in the soil and groundwater. The utility agreed in 2008 to voluntarily clean up the property.

The nearest residential properties are approximately 200 feet southeast of the entrance of the site and consist of a small group of duplexes with five total units sandwiched between two large canning warehouses. Two single-family homes are on Sally Street about 200 feet south of the site. The next closest residential area, one block south of the site on South and Hazel Streets, is a neighborhood with approximately 40 single-family homes.

Four schools are less than a half mile away, although all are on the other side of Highway 25, the main artery through town. In addition, Hollister officials are trying to revitalize their downtown, and the property could become a different use at some point.



DEPARTMENT *of* TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL

DTSC recommended excavating the contaminated soil and replacing it with clean fill material. Removing the contamination will ensure the site is safe for future uses.

DTSC's job is to protect people from public health hazards, and to preserve the environment. The excavation is likely to begin this summer and take three to four months to complete.



Photo of San Benito Street in Hollister by Brendel Signature
