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Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board

May 6, 2015

Penny Newman, Executive Director
CCAEJ
P.O. Box 33124
Jurupa Valley, CA 92519

RIVERSIDE AGRICULTURE PARK REMEDIATION AND CLEANUP

Dear Ms. Newman:

This letter is in response to your March 5, 2015 letter regarding concerns at the Riverside Agriculture Park (the Site).

Your letter noted that there was a sewage sludge spill at the Site in 2003. This spill was reported to us and our staff responded to this spill that occurred when a construction crew accidentally ruptured an old sewage sludge digester pipe. We were one of a number of agencies that responded to this spill. After initial consultations among the agencies, it was determined that the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) would take the lead in the oversight of the cleanup efforts related to the spill. It is our understanding that DTSC's oversight of the cleanup and remediation of the Site was in accordance with the existing laws and regulations. On April 1, 2014, DTSC issued a Certificate of Completion for the Site indicating that the Site was cleaned up to acceptable regulatory levels.

In your letter you also expressed concerns about soil and groundwater contamination at the Site. As stated above, the Site cleanup and remediation were under the direct oversight of DTSC. We reviewed the groundwater information gathered from the Site after completion of remedial activities at the Site (this information is contained in DTSC's EnviroStor website). Even though a few analytical results for various constituents exceeded the regulatory levels as indicated in your letter, subsequent investigations indicated that there were no significant quantities of pollutants at the Site that warranted any further action. A few details are provided below.

The February 6, 2006 *"Groundwater Monitoring Report" by Frey Environmental, Inc.* provides groundwater information from nine onsite groundwater monitoring wells. The analytical results of the September and November 2005 rounds of samples did not indicate any total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPHs) or volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in any of the water samples collected. Low levels of perchlorate were detected in all three rounds in four of the wells, with the highest level being 16 micrograms per liter (µg/L). In November 2005, groundwater samples were analyzed for semi-volatile

organic compounds (SVOCs) and poly aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs); these compounds were not detected in the water samples. During 2005 and 2006, the water samples were also analyzed for polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Initially PCBs (PCB Aroclor 1248) was detected in four wells ranging from 1 to 19 µg/L. With each sampling event, the PCB concentrations decreased. Chromium was detected in three wells in the September and November 2005 rounds of samples with concentrations of 5.3 to 55.90 µg/L. Chromium was detected in only one well in the January 2006 round at a concentration of 5.10 µg/L. The drinking water level (MCL of 50 µg/L) for chromium was only exceeded in one sample collected at well MW9 in November 2005. Thallium was detected in one well in September 2005 at 23.3 µg/L (MW6) which exceeded the MCL of 2 µg/L. Thallium was not detected in the next two rounds of groundwater sampling from any of the wells. Lead was detected in all the wells during the January 2006 sampling round with concentrations ranging from 13.9 to 17.1µg/L (action level for lead is 15 µg/L).

After several rounds of groundwater sampling and analyses during 2005 and 2006, additional groundwater sampling and analyses, offsite groundwater sampling and Santa Ana River streambed and sediment sampling and analyses and other studies were conducted during 2012, 2013 and 2014. From these studies, DTSC staff concluded that groundwater and river sediment were not impacted to a significant degree by activities at the Site and recommended no further action. On May 19, 2014, DTSC issued a "No Further Action" letter to the City of Riverside for offsite investigation related to the Site.

Most allegations in your letter appear to be based on a review of incomplete information regarding the site. During the past few years, we have received a number of reports of illegal disposal of materials from the Site at various locations. We thoroughly investigated each of these complaints and each one of the complaints proved to be unfounded.

As explained above, a complete review of all the information for the Site indicates that the investigations and the cleanup at the site were conducted in accordance with the established regulatory protocols and there is no information that would indicate that any further investigation of the activities at the Site is warranted.

Any questions regarding the cleanup and remediation of the Site should be directed to the Department of Toxic Substances Control. Any questions regarding our involvement with the Site investigations should be directed to Chuck Griffin at 951-782-4996 or chuck.griffin@waterboards.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Kurt V. Berchtold
Executive Officer

cc: California Environmental Protection Agency – Matt Rodriquez
California Department of Toxic Substances Control – Barbara Lee
California Department of Fish and Wildlife – Jeff Brandt
South Coast Air Quality Management District – Barry Wallerstein
US Environmental Protection Agency – Jared Blumenfeld, Kathleen Johnson, Nicole Moutoux, and Mathy Stanislaus