



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION IX  
75 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
Underground Storage Tanks Program Office  
(LND-4-3)

DEC 16 2015

CERTIFIED MAIL 7000 0520 0025 3714 5047  
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. King Freeman  
Pala Store  
Pala Mission Boulevard  
Pala, California 92059

Subject: Conditional No Further Action Determination  
Leaking Underground Storage Tank (UST) Site  
Pala Store, Pala, California (EPA ID: PALA003)

Dear Mr. Freeman:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 9 UST Program Office (USTPO) has completed the review of the report, *Sampling of Groundwater Monitoring Wells, Pala Store, Pala, California* dated September 10, 2015. The sampling was conducted on August 27, 2015 by DMJ Consulting of La Verne, California. EPA and Mr. Freeman has been working collaboratively since 1999 with the Pala Environmental Department (PED) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Southern California Agency to address the release from leaking underground storage tank (UST) at this site. Attachment A provides the site history and details on site assessments.

Based on the findings presented in the report and our agreement with the PED Director, Dr. Shasta Gaughen, EPA is issuing a *conditional* no further action for this site. EPA has determined that while the current levels of contamination in groundwater directly below the site no longer pose a threat to the environment, further data is necessary to assure that downgradient production wells do not show impacts from the historical contamination. In 2008, initial sampling of the three production wells showed "non-detect" for petroleum-related compounds, however, PED plans to conduct future sampling of the three downgradient production wells. The detail of the sampling plan is found in the Attachment B.

We have discussed this site, and our recommendation with the PED. However, should petroleum contamination believed to be associated with the Pala Store be found in any of the production wells, EPA will contact you to provide guidance regarding additional site investigation and monitoring.

If you have any questions regarding the information contained in this letter, please contact Tess Salire of my staff at (415) 972-3376, or you can contact me directly at (415)-972-3369.

Sincerely,



Steven Linder, P.E., Manager  
Underground Storage Tank Program Office

Electronic CC: Robert Smith, Chairman, Pala Tribe  
Shasta Gaughen, Director, Pala Environment Department  
Robert Eben, Superintendent, BIA Southern Agency

Attachments: A. Site Chronology and Investigation  
B. Sampling the Downgradient Production Wells  
PED Memo detailing sampling plan  
PED Sampling Chart – to outline past/future sampling of these 3 wells

## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **Site Chronology and Investigation**

#### **Site History**

Based on information provided in the EPA Form 7530-1 Notification for Closure of Underground Storage Tanks (USTs) dated?, Mr. Freeman operated three steel USTs at the Pala Store in the 1990's, the Pala Store sold and stored gasoline in the USTs which consisted of two, 550-gallon tanks and one, 1,000-gallon tank. The tanks were last used in June 1994 and were permanently closed in January 20, 1999 by Accurate Backhoe Service Engineering of Valley Center, California.

#### **Previous Site Characterizations**

The January 1999 UST removal was funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs Southern California Agency. Site assessment activities confirmed a petroleum release to the soil above EPA's screening levels for gasoline range organics (GRO) and diesel range organics (DRO). Multiple perforations in the mantle in two of the three tanks caused releases of hydrocarbons into the surrounding soil. The contaminated soil, excavated during the tank removal was returned into the tank pit.

Between 2001 and 2004, the Pala Tribe Environmental Services funded Tetra Tech EM, Inc. (Tetra Tech) of San Diego, California site assessment activities to determine the extent of soil and groundwater contamination at site. Soil contamination below the tank location were found at least 25 feet below ground surface. Four groundwater monitoring wells (MWs) were installed in 2003 and contamination in groundwater was detected above the federal maximum contaminant levels (MCLs).

#### **2015 Groundwater Sampling**

EPA issued several letters to Mr. Freeman since 2004 regarding the site. However, on March 2015, EPA initiated correspondence and phone calls with Mr. Freeman confirming, that as the owner and operator of the USTs, he is still responsible to respond to the release until EPA determined that no further action is needed. EPA required Mr. Freeman to conduct groundwater sampling in the four monitoring wells (MWs) at the site. Mr. Freeman retained DMJ Consulting (DMJ) of Laverne, California to conduct sampling of the monitoring wells (MWs) at the site. DMJ conducted the sampling in August 2015 and the results of the analysis indicated the levels were either non-detect (ND) or below the MCL. The total petroleum hydrocarbon (TPH) detected were all below 1 part per million indicating that there is negligible contamination leaching from the soil. The benzene (B) level in MW-1 is also below the MCL, as well as toluene, ethylbenzene, total xylenes (TEX), and methyl tertiary-butyl ether (MTBE). All the other MWs were NDs for BTEX and MTBE.

DMJ's report noted that three production (water supply) wells were drilled in 2008 adjacent to the San Luis Rey River. Two wells are located directly downgradient of the site. Pala's Environmental Department (PED) has confirmed that these wells are not currently online. In 2008, the PED pulled Title XXII Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) samples for all three of the production wells (see attachment). This data included volatile organic compound (VOC) samples, which came back as non-detect for all three wells for both MTBE and BTEX parameters.

## **ATTACHMENT B**

### **Sampling the Downgradient Production Wells**

EPA and The Pala Environmental Department (PED) have discussed the possibility that if the wells are brought online or activated, the pumping associated with their use may affect groundwater flow. Previous high levels of contamination in soil and groundwater at the Pala Store, now at non-detect for contaminants of concern, should be monitored at the production wells. Although the levels of contamination in groundwater directly at the Pala Store are below the MCL, the site's historical contamination in groundwater may have migrated offsite which can be drawn to the production wells once they start pumping groundwater. Residual soil contamination in the vadose zone may be mobilized with the fluctuation in the water table associated with water well pumping.

On October 29, 2015 EPA had a teleconference with Dr. Shasta Gaughen, PED Director, to discuss EPA's concern with these supply wells. EPA alerted the Pala Tribe Utilities Department regarding the previous high levels of contamination in soil and groundwater at the upgradient Pala Store. Once these supply wells are activated, EPA requested sampling for TPH and VOCs (BTEX and MTBE). Dr. Gaughen agreed that sampling of the wells are in order and she referred our recommendation to PED's water quality specialist.

On December 2, 2015 EPA received PED's sampling plan for the three downgradient production wells. The attachments provide more details on the sampling plan. The three wells are technically offline; the Oaks Well (Production Well #1) (see Figure in attached memo) is expected to be online soon and was sampled in October 2015. All samples came back non-detect for TPH and VOCs. In 2016, PED will pull the another TPH sample for the Production Well #1 and follow-up VOC samples will also be pulled in 2016 and 2017.

The other two wells will be sampled once they become online. At this time, the Tribe has no plans to connect either of these wells, so this sampling may not be done for a few years. Future sampling plan for all three wells includes sampling every year for two years after the initial sampling.

The Tribe already samples for VOC's on a 6-year schedule, according to their SDWA compliance sampling, so this parameter will always be monitored as long as these wells are used for public drinking water system.

EPA will check in with the Tribe annually to verify these sampling requirements are implemented.



PALA ENVIRONMENTAL DEPARTMENT  
PALA BAND OF MISSION INDIANS  
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## MEMO

**TO:** US EPA, attn. Tess Salire

**FROM:** Heidi Brow, Pala Environmental Department

**DATE:** December 2, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Sampling Plan re: Downgradient Public Wells from King Freeman's LUST Site

The Pala Utilities Department (PUD) is aware of the potential contamination source at King Freeman's store, as it was discussed back in 2008 by the Pala Environmental Department (PED), PUD, and the consultant firm who originally helped to site the well locations. Future sampling will be rolled in with our regular Safe Drinking Water Act sampling, in order to be reviewed annually by both PED and PUD. PED has put together a sampling plan in order to conduct initial TPH & VOC sampling once the wells go online, as well as 2 additional rounds (conducted once a year). The Tribe already samples for VOC's on a 6 year schedule, according to our SDWA compliance sampling, so this parameter will always be monitored as long as these wells are used for our public drinking water system.

### Past Sampling at Production Wells #1, 2, and 3

Pala Environmental Department pulled Title XXII SDWA samples for all 3 of the production wells directly downgradient from King Freeman's Store back in 2008 (see attachment). This data included VOC samples, which came back as non-detect for all 3 wells for both MTBE and BTEX parameters.

All 3 of these wells are still technically offline (not in use). The Oaks Well (Production Well #1) has been connected to our system and will be going online soon, and VOC samples were pulled October 2015, which came back as non-detect. Pala Environmental Department will continue to follow up with this well (ie: taking TPH & VOC samples in 2016), even though it is not one of the wells of direct concern. It is possible that some contamination may migrate towards this well once the Tribe begins to use it in 2016.

### Future Sampling Plan

Once Production Wells #2 and #3 come online, PED will pull an initial round of TPH [EPA 8015B TPH Diesel][EPA 8015B TPH Gasoline] and VOC [EPA 524.2 MTBE and BTEX – Benzene, Toluene, Ethylbenzene, and Xylenes] samples, as well as follow up samples once a year for the following 2 years. At this time, the Tribe has no plans to connect either of these wells, so this sampling may not be done for a few years.

In 2016, PED will pull the initial TPH sample for the Production Well #1 (initial round of VOC sampling was done in October 2015); the follow-up VOC samples will be pulled in 2016 and 2017.

Name of Well (EPA records)	Name of Well (Tribe)	Sampling Already Done	Future Sampling (once wells go online)
<u>Production Well #1</u>	Oaks Well	(2008) Title 22 SDWA Sampling (2015) VOC's [ <i>BTEX &amp; MTBE levels were non detect</i> ]	*Initial sample: TPH (2016) *VOC's: once a year (2016, 2017) *TPH: once a year (2017, 2018)
<u>Production Well #2</u>	Fire Station Well	(2008) Title 22 SDWA Sampling	* Initial sample: TPH, VOC (BTEX & MTBE) *VOC's: once a year, for 2 years *TPH: once a year, for 2 years
<u>Production Well #3</u>	Trujillo Well	(2008) Title 22 SDWA Sampling	* Initial sample: TPH, VOC (BTEX & MTBE) *VOC's: once a year, for 2 years *TPH: once a year, for 2 years



Thanks,

Heidi Brow

Pala Band of Mission Indians  
Pala Environmental Department, Water Resource Specialist  
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(760)891-3514    [hbrow@palatribe.com](mailto:hbrow@palatribe.com)

Included as attachments in email:

- (attachments #1-3) initial Title 22 sampling for all 3 production wells (2008)
- (attachment #4) recent VOC data pulled for Production Well #1 (Oaks Well)(2015)
- (attachment #5) Sampling Chart – to outline past/future sampling of these 3 wells

## King Freeman LUST Site - Sampling Plan for Downgradient Wells

		2008	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Production Well #1</b>	<b>Oaks Well</b>	<i>Initial Title 22 Sampling [10-08-2008]</i>	<i>VOC Sampling [10-09-2015]</i>						
	TPH - Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons (EPA8015B TPH Diesel)(EPA8015B TPH Gasoline)			initial	year 1	year 2			
	VOC - MTBE	ND	ND						
	VOC - Benzene	ND	ND						
	VOC - Toluene	ND	ND						
	VOC - Ethylbenzene	ND	ND						
VOC - Xylenes, Total	ND	ND							
<b>Production Well #2</b>	<b>Fire Station Well</b>	<i>Initial Title 22 Sampling [10-30-2008]</i>	<i>well not online</i>						
	TPH - Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons (EPA8015B TPH Diesel)(EPA8015B TPH Gasoline)				initial	year 1	year 2		
	VOC - MTBE	ND			?				
	VOC - Benzene	ND			?				
	VOC - Toluene	ND			?				
	VOC - Ethylbenzene	ND			?				
VOC - Xylene	ND			?					
<b>Production Well #3</b>	<b>Trujillo Creek Well</b>	<i>Initial Title 22 Sampling [09-26-2008]</i>	<i>well not online</i>						
	TPH - Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons (EPA8015B TPH Diesel)(EPA8015B TPH Gasoline)					initial	year 1	year 2	
	VOC - MTBE	ND				?			
	VOC - Benzene	ND				?			
	VOC - Toluene	ND				?			
	VOC - Ethylbenzene	ND				?			
VOC - Xylene	ND				?				

**\*\* initial start date depends on when PUD puts the well online**

**\*\* initial start date depends on when PUD puts the well online**

<u>Date [Lab]</u>	<u>parameter</u>	<u>method</u>	<u>reporting limit</u>
10-08-2008, 10-30-2008, 09-26-2008 [Test America]	MTBE	EPA 524.2	3.0 ug/l
	Benzene	EPA 524.2	0.50 ug/l
	Toluene	EPA 524.2	0.50 ug/l
	Ethylbenzene	EPA 524.2	0.50 ug/l
	Xylenes, Total	EPA 524.2	1.0 ug/l
10-09-2015 [Test America]	MTBE	EPA 524.2	3.0 ug/l
	Benzene	EPA 524.2	0.50 ug/l
	Toluene	EPA 524.2	0.50 ug/l
	Ethylbenzene	EPA 524.2	0.50 ug/l
	Xylenes, Total	EPA 524.2	0.50 ug/l

	no samples were pulled
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	planned future sampling
	routine SDWA sampling