FACT SHEET #2: Former Athens Tank Farm

Update on Soil, Soil Gas and Groundwater Investigation

Ujima Village and Earvin Magic Johnson Regional Park **September 2010**

Cal/EPA

CALIFORNIA Water Board

INTRODUCTION

This fact sheet has been prepared to provide interested community members with an update on the environmental investigation currently in progress at the former site of the Athens Tank Farm, located on 122-acres in the Willowbrook area of Los Angeles County. The site is bounded on the north by East 120th Street, the west by Avalon Boulevard, the south by El Segundo Boulevard, and the east by a single family residential development (located to the west of Central Avenue). The area is now occupied by the Ujima Village Apartment Complex, one child care facility (operated on property owned by the Ujima Housing Corporation (UHC), and the Earvin "Magic" Johnson Regional Park (Park). The entire area of the former Athens Tank Farm will be collectively referred to as "the Site."

Information about former Athens Tank Farm operations, as well as the environmental histories of Ujima Village and the Park, is available at the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) office as well as the Site's information repository inside the AC Bilbrew Library, located at 150 East El Segundo Boulevard, Los Angeles. Information can also be obtained by contacting Gita Kapahi at the State Water Resources Control Board. Her contact information is provided at the end of this document.

OVERVIEW OF INVESTIGATION

The purpose of this environmental investigation is to: 1) Investigate the type and distribution of chemicals that are present in the soil and groundwater as a result of former tank farm operations at the Site; 2) Evaluate the potential threat these substances may pose to human health and the environment; and 3) Design and implement a remediation (cleanup) program to mitigate potential risk to human health and the environment. The chemicals of primary concern are known as total petroleum hydrocarbons, and include benzene, ethyl-benzene, toluene and xylene. The State of California has determined that under certain circumstances exposure to these chemicals can be harmful to human health. The environmental work performed at the Site is under the direction of the Regional Board, with support from the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). Both the Regional Board and DTSC are components of the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA).

RECENT ACTIVITIES AND ANALYTICAL RESULTS

At this time the *initial* environmental investigation has been completed at both Ujima Village and the Park. The goal of this phase has primarily focused on data collection from shallow soil and soil vapor to evaluate whether the chemicals present at the Site pose a risk to Ujima residents or those visiting or working at the Site. The initial investigation involved taking soil, soil vapor and air samples as well as water, sediment and fish tissue samples from the two lakes in the Park following procedures approved by both the Cal/EPA and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA). All samples were sent to laboratories and analyzed using procedures approved by both Agencies.

- Test results indicate that subsurface soils at several locations across the Site contain elevated levels of petroleum hydrocarbons and related chemicals. Elevated levels of petroleum hydrocarbons are detected at depths of approximately 10 feet and deeper below the ground surface and are unlikely to come into contact with Site users. The groundwater at the Site occurs at an average depth of 37 feet beneath the surface of the ground and is under investigation. Although groundwater is found to be impacted with petroleum hydrocarbon and related compounds it is not used for drinking, irrigation or any other purpose at the Site. The water that is used at the Site is supplied from other sources. Due to its depth, the groundwater is unlikely to come into contact with anyone at the Site.

- For Ujima Village, a human health screening evaluation (HHSE) was performed using indoor and outdoor air quality and shallow soil data. The HHSE provides a conservative estimate of potential health risk associated with potential exposure to chemicals detected during the investigation and it does not include clinical and medical evaluation of the Site users. The HHSE based on the existing data indicates that while benzene and other petroleum related compounds are present in indoor air, their amounts are comparable to those measured in outdoor air in an urban environment, thus indicating no or negligible effect on the indoor air quality from subsurface vapor intrusion. The benzene levels in air measured at the Site are also consistent with regional benzene air concentrations in the South Coast Air Basin.

- There are proposed sports improvement areas located in the Park. Shallow soil samples were taken from these areas and a preliminary human health screening evaluation was performed. **At this time, shallow soil data indicates that there is no health risk to Park users or employees**. Subsequent phases of the investigation have taken additional samples from other areas throughout the Park. The most current report, submitted to the Regional Board on May 31, 2010, provides a summary of soil, soil vapor and groundwater collected from the Park.

- Samples from the water, sediment and fish tissue were taken from the Park's two lakes. Due to the presence of polychlorobiphenyls (PCBs) and methylmercury in the fish tissue samples, the Regional Board requested the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) to evaluate the potential health risk posed by consumption of fish from the lakes at Magic Johnson Park. Based on the fish tissue sample results, OEHHA issued a Health Advisory and Safe Eating Guidelines for Fish from Magic Johnson Lakes in June 2010 which recommended limits on consumption for some fish species tested (particularly largemouth bass and carp). **As a precaution, the County of Los Angeles continues to advise park visitors not to consume fish from either of the Park's two lakes**. Signs in both English and Spanish warning individuals not to consume the fish have been posted in the Park and the County of Los Angeles has stopped stocking the lakes with fish.

- **Ujima Village and Park drinking and irrigation water is safe.** Drinking and irrigation water is supplied by the Metropolitan Water District and Golden State Water Company. It is obtained from different sources outside the community and is tested regularly to ensure that it meets all federal and state drinking water standards before it is brought to the Site.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

This is an ongoing investigation and additional data is being collected and analyzed. To date, hundreds of soil, soil vapor, indoor air, outdoor air and groundwater samples have been collected at the Site. There are four groundwater monitoring wells yet to be installed within the Ujima Village Apartment complex, in accordance with the approved work plan.

The Regional Board is the lead public agency directing the environmental investigation of the Site. Data and findings from the activities described above will be reviewed by the Regional Board. Based on the analysis of this information, the Regional Board will determine when the investigation is complete and what types of remedial activities may be necessary at the Site to protect human health, groundwater resources and the environment.

The aforementioned and upcoming work at the Site will be performed in accordance with appropriate methods and procedures approved by regulatory agencies such as Cal/EPA and U.S. EPA. Sample collection has been and will be conducted under the supervision of registered professionals licensed by the State of California; testing of samples will continue to be performed by laboratories certified by the State of California. Efforts have been and will continue to be made to maintain public safety and to minimize the potential inconvenience to those living, visiting or working in the area. Advance notice of any disruptive activity will be posted whenever possible.

All reports containing test results are available to the public for review at the locations listed below.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

The Regional Board invites and encourages you to learn more about this Site and to comment on the environmental investigation. All work plans and sampling results are available for public review. For your convenience, core documents have been placed in the AC Bilbrew Library. The complete administrative file for the Site is available at the Regional Board's office, by appointment. The administrative file for the Site can also be viewed by visiting the following website:

http://www.geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/search.asp

AC Bilbrew Library
150 East El Segundo Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90061
310-538-3350

Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
320 West 4th Street, Suite 200
Los Angeles, CA 90013
Phone: 213-576-6600 Fax: 213-576-6717

Additionally, fact sheets, work notices and other site-related announcements are mailed to individuals on the Site mailing list. To be included on the Site mail list, please contact Gita Kapahi. Her contact information is listed below.

A toll-free information line has also been established to provide recorded information and updates on the project. Call 866-278-7207 to access the message, which is updated regularly.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions or would like additional information about the environmental investigation being conducted at the Site, please contact:

Gita Kapahi
Director of Public Participation
State Water Resources Control Board
Office of Public Participation
1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95812
916-341-5501
gkapahi@waterboards.ca.gov

For information about other activities at the Site, please contact:

Dr. Teklewold Ayalew, Project Manager California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region 320 W. 4th Street, Suite 200 Los Angeles, CA 90013 tayalew@waterboards.ca.gov	Bill Romanelli, Vice President APCO Worldwide 1201 K Street, Suite 1200 Sacramento, CA 95814 bromanel@apcoworldwide.com *(For ExxonMobil)*
Al Tizani, Chief Executive Office County of Los Angeles Capital Projects/Debt Management 754 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration 500 W. Temple Street Los Angeles, CA 90012 atizani@ceo.lacounty.gov *(For Park inquiries)*	Esther Keosababian, Assistant Director Housing Management Division, Community Development Commission Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles 2 Coral Circle Monterey Park, CA 91755 Esther.Keosababian@lacdc.org *(For Ujima Village inquiries)*