
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

PUBLIC NOTICE CLOSURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL CASE

This will serve as notice that the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) is soliciting comments from the public regarding the pending closure of an environmental case at 557 Ord Ranch Road, Gridley, Butte County (Site).

SUBJECT SITE:

Wilbur-Ellis Company (Former John Taylor Fertilizer),
557 Ord Ranch Road, Gridley, Butte County Assessor's Parcel Number
025-250-069-000.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION COMMENT PERIOD:

9 July 2026 through 8 August 2026.

SUMMARY:

Staff concurs with the request to close the Site Cleanup Program case at 557 Ord Ranch Road because the Site does not pose a threat to human health or the environment as evidenced by the absence of 1,2,3-trichloropropane (TCP) in soil and groundwater samples.

SETTING:

The subject property located at 557 Ord Ranch Road, Gridley, Butte County, Assessor's Parcel Number 025-250-069-000 (Site) is currently a 5.14-acre nut hulling and drying facility operated by Butte Hulling and Drying. The Site is bounded by orchards to the north, west, and northeast, residential property to the southeast, Ord Ranch Road to the south, and the Butte-Sutter Canal to the southwest.

The general direction of groundwater flow in this area is to the southeast towards the Feather River; however, groundwater pumping and the Butte-Sutter Canal may alter localized flow. Groundwater has historically been encountered from 6 to 10 ft bgs in this area.

INVESTIGATION AND REMEDIATION ACTIVITIES:

On 1 December 1998, a concerned citizen sent a letter about potentially improper handling of fertilizers and other chemicals at this Site and others.

In June 2017, Central Valley Water Board staff (Staff) emailed the property owner to arrange to sample the onsite supply well for TCP.

On 1 March 2018, the consultant, Geosyntec, submitted a Site history report and requested no further action for the Site on behalf of the Wilbur-Ellis Company (Discharger).

Staff declined to close the Site due to a result of 670 parts per trillion (ppt) of TCP from a sample taken from the old warehouse on-Site in 1999. The California Maximum Contaminant Level for TCP is 5ppt.

On 23 October 2018, Staff conditionally approved a Work Plan for soil and groundwater sampling to address the 1998 complaint, determine the spill source, and determine the extent of the plume. In 2019, Geosyntec notified Staff that they could not carry out the approved work because the property owner denied them access to the Site.

Staff sent access request letters to the property owner in January and March 2025. The property owner authorized access to the Site, allowing the Discharger to complete the proposed work. Geosyntec submitted a Revised Work Plan on 26 June 2025 that was approved by Staff on 3 July 2025.

Geosyntec's 27 February 2026 Site Investigation Results Memorandum details the collection of four soil samples and six grab groundwater samples ranging in depth from 5 to 36 feet below ground surface and a grab groundwater sample from the supply well, none of which had a detection of TCP. Results of yearly TCP sampling of the supply well by the property owner from 2017 to 2022 and 2025 have had no detection of TCP. Due to the lack of TCP detections, Geosyntec requested case closure for this Site.

Staff has reviewed the Site history and the request for closure by Geosyntec and concurs. There is no detectable level of TCP in the samples that were taken on 9 and 10 December 2025, including the location that had 670 ppt of TCP in 1999, and the supply well onsite has consistently had no detection of TCP since sampling began in 2017.

WHERE DO I GET MORE INFORMATION?

General information regarding the Site can be obtained from the State Water Resources Control Board's [GeoTracker](https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/) Website.
(https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/profile_report.asp?global_id=T10000003056).

All interested agencies, groups and persons wishing to comment on the pending case closure must provide these comments in writing. The comments should be submitted by **8 August 2026** to the Central Valley Water Board's office at 364 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 205, Redding, CA 96002.

For information, please call Bill Bergmann at (530) 224-4852, william.bergmann@waterboards.ca.gov, or the footer address with questions or comments.