

STATE OF ALASKA

SARAH PALIN, GOVERNOR

**DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
DIVISION OF SPILL PREVENTION AND RESPONSE
CONTAMINATED SITES PROGRAM**

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August 29, 2007

Virginia Smiley
Division Director
Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes
Health and Social Services
P.O. Box 110211
Juneau, AK 99811-0211

Re: Closure Determination
Sitka Pioneer Home Leaking Underground Storage Tank
129 Katlian Street, Sitka
Contaminated Sites File #1525.26.013

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Contaminated Sites Program has completed a file review for the referenced site. This letter documents DEC's decision regarding site closure under 18 AAC 75 and 18 AAC 78 regulations.

Site Description and History

The site is located in downtown Sitka on Katlian Street. The former 5,000-gallon heating oil underground storage tank (UST) was buried on the outside edge of the building that borders Barracks Street.

In December 1997, petroleum contamination was encountered when the tank was excavated and replaced with an upgraded system to meet new regulatory requirements. The old tank was in good condition with no obvious holes or cracks. After excavation it was cut open, cleaned and transported to the Sitka landfill for disposal. Most of the old product lines were removed during the excavation. The other product lines below the concrete floor within the Pioneer Home were cleared of fluid, permanently capped at both ends, and left in place.

At the time of the UST excavation, contaminated soil totaling approximately 18 cubic yards was stockpiled on a liner at a local contractor's storage yard.

Three soil samples were taken from the walls of the excavation pit and two soil samples were taken from the soil stockpile. One groundwater sample was taken from the excavation pit water. Samples were tested for diesel range organics (DRO) and benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and total xylenes, (collectively known as BTEX).

Sample Results

Analytical Results	DRO (ppm)	BTEX (ppm)
Soil – stockpile	150	ND
Soil - excavation walls	ND	ND
Water in excavation pit	210	19.71

ND – non detect

ppm – parts per million

An Underground Storage Tank Closure Report was completed by Agra Earth and Environmental and received by DEC on April 27, 1998. The site has remained open on DEC's database because a full release investigation, as required by 18 AAC 78, was not performed.

Soil Cleanup Levels

Soil

Soil cleanup levels were established in 1997 as follows to direct excavation activities at the site.

Contaminant in soil	Cleanup level (ppm)
DRO	100
Total BTEX	10

Groundwater

At the time of tank excavation, groundwater cleanup levels were not formally established.

Exposure Pathway Evaluation

Potential exposure pathways for human health at this site include contact with surface soil, indoor air inhalation and groundwater ingestion.

The contaminant levels in the stockpiled soil were slightly above the cleanup levels set in 1997 for DRO, the contaminant of concern. Current applicable cleanup levels are higher, which means that any residual contamination in the soil that was removed from the site is not a concern. This is an important consideration for the purpose of DEC's decision because documentation regarding the status of the soil stockpile is not present in the site file.

Groundwater underlying the site is not used for drinking water or other purposes. The City and Borough of Sitka operates a drinking water distribution system in the area. The source of the water is Blue Lake, located several miles away from the site. Since the contaminant source (the tank) and all of the contaminated soil have been removed, DEC believes that any residual groundwater contamination has naturally degraded over time. These factors negate the need to collect additional groundwater samples; typically, a single sample collected from an excavation pit is

not considered representative and cannot be used to support a site closure decision.

A significant concern at the Pioneer Home was that residual volatile contaminants may be entering the building and affecting indoor air quality. In response to this concern, DEC conducted an indoor air building survey on August 1, 2007 with the assistance of Peter Kennedy, maintenance foreman (survey attached). During the survey it was found that the ventilation system in the Pioneer Home should quickly evacuate volatile contaminants that may enter the building below grade through cracks and holes in the boiler room wall (see photo). Recommended preventive measures include repairing cracks and holes and sealing the wall with concrete sealant paint.



Determination

The investigation and cleanup of Sitka Pioneer Home has met the substantive requirements specified in 18 Alaska Administrative Code (AAC) 75 Article 3 - Discharge, Reporting, Cleanup, and Disposal of Oil and Other Hazardous Substances. DEC has also determined that the cleanup has met the substantive requirements of 18 AAC 78, Underground Storage Tanks, that a full release investigation is not necessary for this site, and that no further remedial action is required.

In accordance with 18 AAC 78.276, additional investigation and cleanup may be required if new information is discovered which leads DEC to make a determination that the cleanup described in this decision is not protective of human health, safety, and welfare or the environment.

If you are in disagreement with this decision you may seek an adjudicatory hearing under 18 AAC 15.200 – 18 AAC 15.920 within 30 days of the mailing of this decision. Please call me at (907) 465-5229 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Evonne Reese
Project Manager

cc: Jennifer Klein (Finance and Management of Facilities, DHSS)
Peter Kennedy (Sitka Pioneer Home)