

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
P.O. Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Department of Toxic Substances Control
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program
9211 Oakdale Avenue
Chatsworth, CA 91311

Project Title: Removal Action Workplan, Amani Apartments

Project Location: 4200 West Pico Boulevard, Los Angeles

County: Los Angeles

Project Applicant: Wakeland Housing and Development Corporation

Approval Action Under Consideration by DTSC: Removal Action Workplan

Statutory Authority: California Health and Safety Code, Chapter 6.8

Project Description: The proposed removal activities include the excavation and offsite disposal of approximately 203 cubic yards of lead-affected soil from 4200 West Pico Boulevard, Los Angeles (Site), also known as the Amani Apartments project. This determination is based upon the findings of the Removal Action Workplan (RAW), including sample collection from the Site, sample evaluation, consideration of potential remedial methods for the impacted soil, and selection of the appropriate remedial measure to address the onsite contamination. DTSC has regulatory authority to approve the RAW, prepared by Leighton and Associates, Inc. (Leighton) and dated May 29, 2020, pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 25187 and 25200.14.

The RAW activities will be completed in conjunction with the construction of a 5-story mixed-use building (residential/commercial). The construction project qualified as a Streamlined Infill Project (SIP) pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) 35 (California Government Code Section 65913.4). Pursuant to Senate Bill ("SB") 35 and Government Code Section 65913.4, a project that satisfies all of the objective planning standards of Government Code Section 65913.4(a) is subject to the streamlined, ministerial approval process provided in Government Code Section 65913.4(b) and (c). Therefore, pursuant to Government Code Section 65913.4 and Public Resources Code Section 21080(b)(1), the Streamlined Infill Project is Statutorily Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") as a ministerial project.

This finding was documented in a Letter of Determination issued by the Los Angeles City Planning Commission following its meeting of August 8, 2019, at which time they approved the use of SB 35 for the following project: Construction, use, and maintenance of a 5-story, 66-foot tall mixed-use building comprised of 54 dwelling units (100 percent affordable, exclusive of one market-rate manager's unit, including 7 Very Low Income and 46 Low Income units), and 2,500 square feet of at-grade commercial office space. The site is currently vacant with surface parking, with no trees on the subject site and four trees along the public right-of-way which are proposed to remain.

Although the excavation and removal activities are technically part of the construction project, the Letter of Determination does not apply to RAW approval; consequently, DTSC has completed an independent analysis of the RAW activities subject to DTSC's discretionary approval and determined that the RAW is also exempt from CEQA (see below).

Background: The Site is a 0.58-acre, rectangular-shaped property located on the southwest corner of the intersection of West Pico Boulevard and South Crenshaw Boulevard in the city of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California. The Los Angeles County Assessor's office designated the Site as Assessor Parcel Number 5082-023-002. Historically, the Site was developed as an automotive/gasoline service station from 1924 until 1974. A car wash facility also operated on the western portion of the Site from 1924 until 1962, when it was demolished. A restaurant was located in the southern portion of the Site and operated from 1962 to 1974. In 1974, the restaurant and automotive/gas service station were demolished, and the Site has remained relatively undeveloped since that time, with seasonal use as a Christmas tree sales lot.

In May 2018, Geo Forward, Inc. (GFI) conducted a Site investigation consisting of a geophysical survey and the advancement of 14 soil borings to depths ranging from 6 to 26 feet below ground surface (ft bgs). In 9 of the 14 borings, single depth soil gas probes were installed at depths ranging from 5 to 25 ft bgs. Soil samples were collected from 12 borings with all samples analyzed for total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) carbon chain and select soil samples analyzed for volatile organic compounds (VOCs [four samples]), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs [two samples]), and Title 22 Metals (two samples). Soil vapor samples were analyzed for VOCs and TPH as gasoline (TPH-G). At least three metals anomalies were identified at the Site during the completion of the geophysical survey in areas suspected of containing former underground hydraulic lifts, clarifiers, or waste oil tanks. No evidence of large fuel underground storage tanks (USTs) were identified during completion of the geophysical survey.

In October 2018, Leighton conducted a Limited Phase II Environmental Site Assessment of the Site. Five pothole trenches were excavated using a backhoe to determine if the anomalies identified during GFI's Site investigation would require additional assessment or remedial activities and for the collection of additional soil samples. Six soil borings were advanced throughout the Site for the collection of soil samples and installation of soil gas probes. Soil gas probes were installed in four of the six soil borings at depths of 5, 10, and 20 ft bgs.

On April 30 and May 1, 2020, Leighton completed supplemental soil gas sampling activities at the site. The purpose of the supplemental soil gas sampling was to fill data gaps identified by DTSC upon their review of previous site assessment reports prepared for the Site. Soil gas samples were collected from two locations near the former waste oil UST locations and one located along the southern property boundary. Soil gas probes were installed at depths of 5 and 20 ft bgs in each of the three locations.

Based on the assessment activities performed by Leighton and GFI, shallow Site soil is contaminated with lead at concentrations above residential screening criteria.

Project Activities: Project activities include the excavation and off-site disposal of lead-affect soil from the Site. In addition, a 36-inch square, 12-inch thick concrete sump that was associated with the former onsite car wash facility will be removed from the southwest corner of the Site along with any underlying impacted soils. An area of shallow soil impacts in the northwest corner of the Site measures approximately 30 feet by 30 feet. An area of shallow soil impacts in the southwest corner of the Site measures approximately 35 feet by 18 feet. The depth of the lead-affected soil is estimated to range from 1 to 3 feet bgs, with the majority of impacts anticipated to be present in the upper 1 foot. It is estimated that approximately 203 cubic yards of lead-affected soil remains in-place that will require removal action. Excavation will be accomplished utilizing standard construction equipment including backhoes, excavators, and front-end loaders. Excavation will occur in the top one to two feet of soil. The excavated soil will be segregated into two disposal classifications: non-hazardous and non-RCRA (Resource Conservation and Recovery Act) hazardous (California Hazardous). The excavation will be backfilled with clean, imported soil tested to confirm that it meets the thresholds for use at a residential property. The import material will be tested in general conformance with DTSC's Information Advisory – Clean Imported Fill Material.

The Site is in the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Control District (SCAQMD). The SCAQMD has two rules that address excavations (Rules 1150 and 1166) and two that address fugitive dust (Rules 403 and 1466). Rule 1150 applies to the excavation of sanitary landfills and does not apply to this project. Rule 1166 is not expected to apply to this project, because it governs the excavation of soil containing significant concentrations of VOCs, which were not detected during previous site investigations. Rule 403 will be implemented at the Site by the removal action contractor in charge of daily construction activities. Rule 1466 is an add-on to Rule 403 and will be implemented during earthwork activities conducted at the Site.

During earthwork activities to be completed at the Site, dust control measures will be implemented, and airborne particulate levels will be monitored to limit fugitive dust emissions. In order to minimize the potential for the spread of contamination outside the excavation area, dust suppression will be performed by lightly spraying or misting the work areas with water. Water mist may also be used on soil placed in bins or being loaded in the transport trucks. After soil is loaded into trucks, lockable bins, or placed in stockpiles, the soil will be covered with tarps (for trucking), lids (for bins) or plastic sheeting (stockpiles). All trucks will be dry decontaminated prior to leaving the excavation area by dry brushing any visible loose soil and by driving over rumble strips to loosen soil in the truck tire treads. While on the property, all vehicles will maintain slow speeds (i.e., less than 5 miles per hour) for safety purposes and for dust control measures. Efforts will also be made to minimize the soil drop height from the soil handling equipment into the transport trucks, soil bins, or soil stockpiles. A Transportation Plan detailing the disposal facilities, transportation routes, truck movement within the Site, decontamination procedures, etc., is included in the RAW as Appendix E.

Because the areas of soil disturbance are less than 1 acre, a stormwater discharge permit is not required for the remediation contractor. However, the remediation contractor must follow the general contractor's stormwater pollution prevention plan for the overall redevelopment project and Best Management Practices. Further, it is anticipated that this Removal Action will be performed outside of the Los Angeles rainy season.

The Site is currently fenced, and all visitors will be required to enter through a gate and check in for orientation prior to accessing the construction areas. These security measures will remain in-place during the RA activities.

Although not anticipated based on the previous activities at the Site, in the event biological, cultural or historical resources are discovered in the course of project activities, work will be suspended while a qualified biologist, cultural or historical specialist makes an assessment of the area and arrangements are made to protect or preserve any resources that are discovered. If human remains are discovered, no further disturbance will occur in the location where the remains are found, and the County Coroner will be notified pursuant to the Health and Safety Code, Chapter 2, Section 7050.5.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Department of Toxic Substances Control

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Wakeland Housing and Development Corporation

Exempt Status: Common Sense Exemption [14 CCR, Sec. 15061(b)(3)]

Reasons Why Project is Exempt: DTSC has determined with certainty that there is no possibility that the activities in question may have a significant effect on the environment because the project would not result in "a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance."

The administrative record for this project is available to the public by appointment at the following location:

Department of Toxic Substances Control
File Room
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program
9211 Oakdale Avenue
Chatsworth, CA 91311

Additional project information is available on EnviroStor: <https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/>

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TO BE COMPLETED BY OPR ONLY

Date Received for Filing and Posting at OPR:

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

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