
Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

Status of Actions January 2021 PG&E Hinkley Chromium Contamination

Chromium Plume Boundary

In general, the Third Quarter 2020 groundwater data indicate that plume migration is not occurring but do reflect natural fluctuations of groundwater concentrations as remediation progresses. The Third Quarter 2020 chromium plume maps can be viewed on GeoTracker at [Third Quarter 2020 Groundwater Monitoring Report and Domestic Well Sampling Results](https://documents.geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/esi/uploads/geo_report/2383202314/SL0607111288.PDF)

(https://documents.geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/esi/uploads/geo_report/2383202314/SL0607111288.PDF), and are Figures 5-1 through 5-6 of this report.

Previous quarters chromium plume maps are posted on the Water Board's Hinkley website at [Water Board's Hinkley website](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/water_issues/projects/pge/index.shtml) (http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/water_issues/projects/pge/index.shtml), at the bottom of the page under the section titled "Other Documents and Information." The Fourth Quarter 2020 plume map is due on February 10, 2021, consistent with the reporting due dates contained in Cleanup and Abatement Order (CAO) No. R6V-2015-0068.

Request to Expand In-Situ Remediation Zone Permitted Area

PG&E requested a revision to the In-Situ Remediation Zone (IRZ) permitted area under the existing Notice of Applicability (NOA) of General Waste Discharge Requirements, Board Order No. R6V-2008-0014. PG&E proposes to expand the IRZ areas as follows: 600 feet to the west for the Central Area; and 140 feet to the west and 650 feet to the north for the South-Central ReInjection Area. The proposal also includes changes to the sentry well monitoring network used to monitor for treatment byproducts from IRZ operations. The increased size of the IRZ areas is conservative and would allow for future remedial expansion.

Expanding the permitted IRZ areas will require reissuance of the NOA. Water Board staff are exploring ways to build flexibility into the new NOA that would allow PG&E to implement adaptive management as remediation progresses. PG&E is also requesting a change from quarterly to semi-annual reporting, while continuing to collect monitoring data on a quarterly basis. The process by which notifications of adverse conditions are reported will remain unchanged. Water Board staff are working with the IRP Manager to identify ways to allow for public participation by community members prior to release of a draft NOA for public comment.

Completion of the Contingency Plan for Hexavalent Chromium (Cr(VI)) Detected at Well MW-128S1

During the Fourth Quarter 2019, PG&E observed an increase in Cr(VI) concentrations at monitoring well MW-128S1. PG&E responded with the submittal of a contingency plan in February 2020 in accordance with the 2015 CAO requirement V.D. The contingency plan was required because Cr(VI) was detected above 10 micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g/L}$) beyond the containment target. To address the increase in Cr(VI) concentrations, monitoring well MW-128S1 was purged, redeveloped, and sampled. In addition, PG&E operated extraction well EX-32, and collected supplemental groundwater samples from additional wells in the area.

Sampling results from the First, Second, and Third Quarters of 2020 show that Cr(VI) concentrations at monitoring well MW-128S1 have returned to less than 10 $\mu\text{g/L}$. Cr(VI) was not detected above 10 $\mu\text{g/L}$ in surrounding wells and the increased Cr(VI) concentrations were isolated to monitoring well MW-128S1. Sampling of wells, per the contingency plan, was discontinued in the Fourth Quarter 2020 because concentrations of Cr(VI) have been below 10 $\mu\text{g/L}$ for the last three quarters. Groundwater samples will continue to be collected at the frequencies required for site-wide monitoring of this area in the 2015 CAO and subsequently approved sampling programs.

Four-Year Comprehensive Cleanup Status and Effectiveness Report (2016-2019)

PG&E submitted the first *Four-Year Comprehensive Cleanup Status and Effectiveness Report for Years 2016 through 2019* on March 30, 2020. The four-year report evaluated the progress of remedial actions to achieve cleanup timeframes. As part of the 2015 CAO (R6V-2015-0068), Attachment 8, Section II.C, a *Remedial Timeframe Assessment Action Plan* (Action Plan) was submitted on April 29, 2020 as part of the four-year review. The Action Plan presented recommendations to enhance remedial activities and increase remedy effectiveness to reach the goals set out in the 2015 CAO. The Water Board Executive Officer has accepted the Action Plan. The next four-year report is due March 30, 2024.

The *Four-Year Comprehensive Cleanup Status and Effectiveness Report* can be found at [Four-Year Comprehensive Cleanup Status and Effectiveness Report](https://documents.geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/esi/uploads/geo_report/6213955223/SL0607111288.PDF) (https://documents.geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/esi/uploads/geo_report/6213955223/SL0607111288.PDF) and the *Remedial Timeframe Assessment Action Plan* can be found at [Remedial Timeframe Assessment](https://documents.geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/esi/uploads/geo_report/7075251698/SL0607111288.PDF) (https://documents.geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/esi/uploads/geo_report/7075251698/SL0607111288.PDF).

Chromium Background Study

The final draft of the Hinkley Chromium Background Study Report continues to move through the United States Geological Survey (USGS) internal review process. Dr. John Izbicki, the study's lead scientist, reports that progress is going smoothly and that

each step within the review process adds to the quality of the final report. The report is prioritized within the USGS review process, and review staff are working hard to move the report along through the steps.

In December 2020, a supporting report on the geology of the Hinkley Valley was released by the USGS. This report provides new information on surface and subsurface geology to better understand hydrologically important geologic deposits in the Hinkley Valley area and describes certain faults that may control groundwater flow. The information in the geologic report was used to support several chapters of the Hinkley Chromium Background Study Report. Click the link below to access the report:

[Geologic map and borehole stratigraphy of Hinkley Valley and vicinity, San Bernardino County, California \(usgs.gov\)](https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publication/sim3458) (<https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publication/sim3458>).

Your Water Board Staff Contacts

Water Board oversight of the PG&E Hinkley Chromium Cleanup project is provided by staff in the Water Board's Victorville office located at 15095 Amargosa Road, Building 2, Suite 210, Victorville, CA 92394. Your Water Board staff contacts are listed below. Please feel free to contact any of the those listed should you need assistance.

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*Please note, the majority of Lahontan Water Board staff are teleworking due to an Executive Order from Governor Newsom. However, we are available via email and voicemail. We are responding to emails throughout the workday. Responses to voicemail may take more than one business day.