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Richmond company agrees to pay more than \$243,000 to resolve oil spill complaints

SAN FRANCISCO – IMTT-Richmond-CA has agreed to pay \$157,500 to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and \$85,507 to the California Department of Fish and Game Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) related to oil spills into the Santa Fe Channel, which flows into San Francisco Bay.

The spills – three that released a total of approximately 8,600 gallons of oil into the environment – occurred between June 2002 and July 2004 at the company’s oil storage and transfer facility, at 100 Cutting Ave. in Richmond, Calif. This facility can store more than 28 million gallons of oil in above-ground tanks.

In addition to the spills, which are violations of the federal Clean Water Act and both California Government Code and Fish and Game Code, the company did not have adequate secondary containment to prevent oil spills as required by both state and federal laws. The EPA discovered the violations during a September 2003 inspection.

“Oil spills can cause serious environmental harm to the fragile ecosystem of the San Francisco Bay,” said Keith Takata, the director of EPA’s Superfund division for the Pacific Southwest region. “It’s critical that facilities have adequate oil spill plans and effective spill containment in place to prevent accidents, and to lessen environmental impacts caused when accidents occur.”

The EPA’s spill prevention regulations require non-transportation related facilities that store large amounts of oil to have a spill prevention plan that addresses the facility’s design, operation, and maintenance procedures to prevent spills from occurring. Both State and federal laws also require such facilities to develop oil spill contingency plans that specify, in detail, the actions to be taken in response to any oil spill.

“When oil is repeatedly spilled in a waterway, there are cumulative effects which can hinder the recovery of the ecosystem,” OSPR’s Acting Administrator Lisa Curtis said. “Improvements have been made on-site in an effort to minimize any future incidents at this facility.”

For more information, visit: www.epa.gov/Region9/waste/sfund/oilpp/index.html

To learn more about California’s oil spill prevention, preparedness, response and restoration programs, visit www.dfg.ca.gov/ospr.