ALAMEDA COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 24, 2004
TO: Files
FROM: Ariu Levi, Division Chief DEH

SUBJECT: UST PRODUCT RELEASE, 1601 WEBSTER ST IN ALAMEDA

This memo serves as record of my response.

On August 19, 2004, at approximately 1:00 PM I received a voice message to my cell phone from Chief Clifton with the City of Alameda Fire Department. The Chief requested Department assistance at the gas station located at 1601 Webster St. in Alameda. According to Chief Clifton, the station had an unexpected loss of approximately 1,000 gallons of product fuel to the environment. The call was returned to the Chief's voice-mail with the message that the office would respond immediately.

Following the Chief's message, I called the office and spoke to SrHMS Scott Seery with the county's CUPA program. Since the fire department's request was made directly to the office and not to LLNL dispatch as an emergency response request, I asked Scott Seery and not the on-call person to respond. Additionally, since I took the call from the city fire department, I also responded.

Scott and I arrived at the gas station at approximately 1:45 pm. The scene had, by that time, developed into a full emergency response with the city of Alameda Fire Department and Police Department, the County Fire Department, and several representatives for Shell Oil Company, as the responsible party, present. We reported to the Incident Commander. Shortly after our arrival, the Health and Safety Compliance Coordinator for Shell Oil, Tim Woodson, briefed us on the situation and the progress made to mitigate the release and stabilize the site. In situation in summary:

> The fuel release was the result of worker error that caused the bottom of a single wall 10,000-gallon underground gas tank to crack. Upon realizing they had a tank that was losing product, the site workers started aggressively de-watering existing vadose wells in an effort to capture the lost product while it was still in the tank pit peat gravel fill. The water/gas mixture that was pumped out of the wells was pumped to a baker tank already on-site. Unfortunately, the baker tank had an open top and a significant amount of gas fume vented to the environment. To mitigate this now created off-site consequence, a tanker truck was called in. Upon arrival, the product in the open top baker tank was pumped to it. The RP's had a second concern: the damaged tank faced the threat of becoming buoyant and floating on top of ground water. Due to the site's high ground water level, the tanks were intentionally left filled with fuel to ballast them once their asphalt/concrete cover was removed. The cracked tank was, in effect, losing the ballast it needed to remain submerged in the site's naturally occurring high ground water level. In order for the cracked tank not become overly buoyant it was agreed that groundwater pumped from the wells could be pumped into the damaged tank. This action reduced further loss of product by floating the remaining fuel on top of a water layer and it also sufficiently weighed the tank nd prevented it from floating.

Shortly after the briefing, fire staff sent to take field readings for LEL reported back with readings of non-detect. The readings were taken at random sites in the neighborhood and from local sewer manholes. The IC asked for concurrence to scale down the response. I agreed with the recommendation. Before

leaving the scene, Scott and I inspected the tank pit, spoke with Shell's representatives and met with the IC and the department Chief. The process of site clean was described to the Chief and it was confirmed that this office would continue to provide oversight to the following clean up activities.