



# K&L Plating Site Removal Action

United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 9

October 1997

## EPA Conducting Removal Action In East Oakland

### What Are We Doing?

THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA) is conducting a removal action at the K&L Plating site in Oakland, California. A removal action consists of activities taken immediately to protect human health and the environment from the release or threatened release of hazardous substances. The site of the removal action is located in a mixed light industrial, commercial and residential area at 10323 Pearmain Street (see figure 1).

### Why Do We Need to Take Action?

On September 30, 1997 State inspectors discovered a chemical spill inside the K&L plant. Approximately 1,200 gallons of hydrochloric acid had leaked from a 1,500 gallon vat and had accumulated in a secondary, concrete bermed containment area. Upon notification of the leak, Oakland Fire Department and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency hazmat crews responded to assist the State of California staff already present at the site. At that time the Oakland Fire Department secured the perimeter of the facility and initiated further investigation of the incident and the materials involved. Evaluation of the facility showed that numerous other plating-related materials, including several vats of cyanide-based plating solutions, were located within the bermed area affected by the acid spill. The bottoms of two of these tanks were submerged in the acid, as were the concrete footings of the other tanks. Because of the strong corrosive properties of hydrochloric acid, responders were concerned that the acid could eat through the vats and potentially

result in the mixing of hydrochloric acid and the cyanide-based plating solutions. Such a mixture could have produced hydrogen cyanide gas.

### What Have We Done So Far?

To ensure that such a mixture did not occur, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency hazmat crews first removed all of the liquid cyanide from the affected vats and then initiated the removal of the spilled acid. These measures insured that no contact would occur

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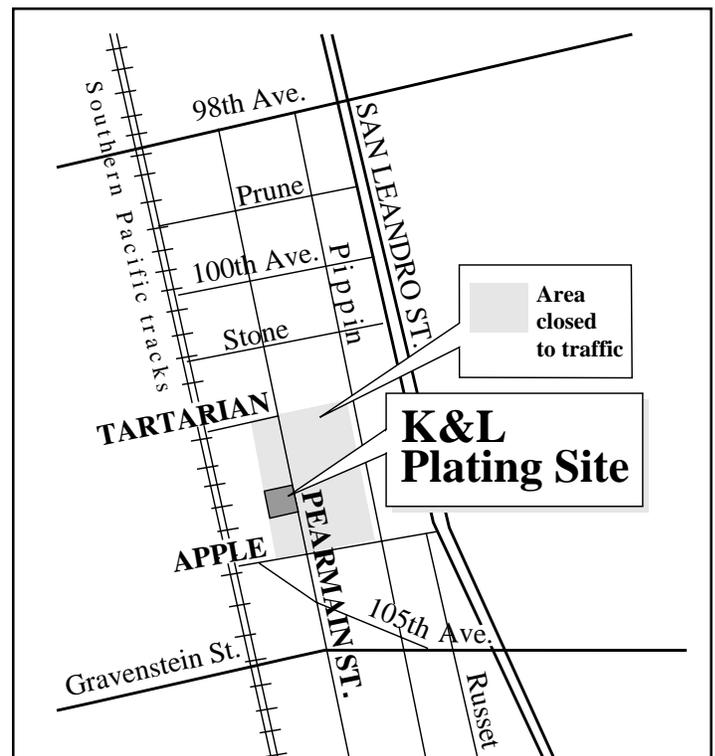


Figure 1: Location of K&L Plating site, 10323 Pearmain Street

between the spilled acid and the cyanide. Air monitoring within the facility and directly outside of it confirmed that no hydrogen cyanide gas was generated in the incident. As a precautionary measure during the initial stages of the response, neighboring residences were temporarily evacuated.

## **Ongoing Activities**

This site is a former plating facility which was closed on September 19, 1997; it had a history of compliance problems with local, state, and federal environmental laws. Now that the initial emergency phase and evacuation is completed and the U.S. EPA has removed and stabilized the hazardous materials involved in the incident, EPA is proceeding with further evaluation and clean-up of the facility. EPA is performing this removal action to mitigate the health risk which may be caused if a person comes into direct contact with the chemicals on site and to ensure that the potential for any hazardous releases from the facility is eliminated.

## **What You May See On and Around the Site**

Federal regulations mandate that workers in close proximity to hazardous materials be properly protected. Therefore, workers on site will be seen wearing protective gear. You should not be alarmed by this. As a precaution, air monitoring will be performed to assure that no airborne contaminants are released to the nearby community. The only inconvenience that the removal action should cause residents are traffic delays on Pearmain Street. In order to manage the necessary equipment to conduct this action, EPA closed Pearmain Street from Tartarian to Apple Street. It will remain closed for approximately three weeks.

**SI NECESITA INFORMACION EN ESPAÑOL,  
POR FAVOR PONGASE EN CONTACTO CON ANGELES HERRERA AL  
(415) 744-2185 O 1-800-231-3075.**

# *Who to Contact at EPA*

This removal action by the U.S. EPA stopped the immediate threat posed to the community by the site. If you have any questions or would like more information on EPA's involvement at this site, please contact:

**Angeles Herrera**  
Community Involvement Coordinator  
U.S. EPA  
75 Hawthorne Street (SFD-3)  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
(415) 744-2185

**Randy Wittorp**  
EPA's Media Contact  
U.S. EPA  
75 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
(415) 744-1589

or leave a message on EPA's TOLL-FREE line:

**1-800-231-3075**

and we will return the call.