



## **PROCEDURES RELATING TO A REQUEST FOR A CERTIFIED HAZARDOUS MATERIALS RECORDS SEARCH FINDING REPORT**

### **BACKGROUND:**

The San Bernardino County Fire Protection District (SBCFPD) Hazardous Materials Division is the Administering Agency and CUPA (Certified Unified Program Agency) for San Bernardino County. As such, SBCFPD is responsible for regulating hazardous materials handlers, hazardous waste generators, underground and aboveground storage tank facilities, and stationary sources that handle regulated substances in San Bernardino County.

Before 2011, SBCFPD Hazardous Materials Division Site Remediation/Local Oversight Program was responsible for directing cleanup of hazardous materials at hundreds of sites in San Bernardino County. Although most of these are former underground storage tank sites, work was also performed on a contractual basis with individual companies to cleanup contamination from other sources as well. As of 2011, SBCFPD no longer has a Site Remediation/Local Oversight Program; however a Voluntary Clean-up Program has taken its place to oversee contaminated properties on a very limited basis which has been approved by the State of California.

Finally, SBCFPD's Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Program, in conjunction with city and county firefighters and local law enforcement, responds to hazardous materials incidents and illegal hazardous waste disposal complaints.

### **REQUEST FOR A CERTIFIED HAZARDOUS MATERIALS RECORDS SEARCH FINDING REPORT:**

SBCFPD's Hazardous Materials Division receives numerous requests for information regarding hazardous materials activities for the purpose of satisfying due diligence requirements, Phase I Environmental Assessments, and other business interests.

In response to this demand, the Division has implemented a process in which individuals may request a Certified Hazardous Materials Records Search Finding Report. The main focus of a Certified Hazardous Materials Records Search Finding Report is to determine whether there exists in the files maintained by SBCFPD any record relating to contamination or reports of spills at a particular site. A Certified Hazardous Materials Records Search Finding Report should reveal whether there are any facilities at the site that are subject to current or past regulatory activity by SBCFPD, such as underground storage tanks, hazardous material handlers, hazardous waste generators, and CalARP facilities, as well as any reports of spills, incidents, complaints, or cleanup activity, that can be a useful tool in providing a history of compliance or non-compliance.

Processing a request for a Certified Hazardous Materials Records Search Finding Report involves extensive and detailed research of a variety of current and archival data, automated records, manual logs, and various program files. Geographically over 20,000 square miles, a large number of properties in San Bernardino County are in remote areas for which site addresses cannot be determined and varying descriptions are used. In some areas of the County, address descriptions have changed over time due to annexations and redevelopment, as well as postal service policies. As part of a Certified Hazardous Materials Records Search Finding Report, property locations are verified utilizing Assessor records, maps, and other such resources to help identify records that could otherwise be overlooked.

Once SBCFPD has completed its records search, within 10 business days of the date in which the request was submitted and payment in full has been received by our office, a Certified Hazardous Materials Records Search Finding Report will be prepared and issued. Such report will detail all SBCFPD records associated with a particular site by type, date, location, and status where applicable. (Any files identified in a Certified Hazardous Materials Records Search Finding Report can be made available for copies and/or review upon request).

If the completed records search reveals no SBCFPD record of hazardous material activity at the site, a Certified Hazardous Materials Records Search Finding Report will be issued, noting that “no records” were identified.

### **REQUESTING A CERTIFIED HAZARDOUS MATERIALS RECORDS SEARCH FINDING REPORT:**

To request a Certified Hazardous Materials Records Search Finding Report, an applicant must submit a Request for a Certified Hazardous Materials Records Search Finding Report with the initial fee of \$136.00 per hour. An applicant must submit a separate request form for each site to be searched. Research exceeding one hour will be assessed at the rate of \$136.00 per hour.

### **SITE DESCRIPTION:**

The Request for a Certified Hazardous Materials Records Search Finding Report form must contain a specific site description, usually a situs address. If a situs address does not exist or cannot be found, an applicant must list another type of location identifier such as Assessor Parcel Number (preferable), cross streets or intersections (e.g., NWC 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. & Main St.), and/or legal description. If possible, attach a map to the request form.

### **TURNAROUND:**

A Request for a Certified Hazardous Materials Records Search Finding Report is processed in the order in which it is received and generally takes 10 business days to complete. Applicants can fax or email the request form to have it posted on the date received, as long as, within 48 hours, payment is sent by separate mail along with the original request form.

**Our office is now accepting credit card payments over the phone only. We accept American Express, Discover, MasterCard and Visa. The transaction fee is 2.29% of the Certified Hazardous Materials Record Search Finding Report fee. Please note: Transaction fees listed above are charged per card transaction by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor. The SBCFPD does not retain any portion of this transaction fee.**

### **REVIEW AND/OR COPIES OF RECORDS:**

All files identified in a Certified Hazardous Materials Records Search Finding Report can be made available for copying and/or review upon request and by appointment. Please note that most of the files maintained by SBCFPD are working files and may be signed out to various division program staff. If files are signed out to SBCFPD staff, there could be a slight delay in the appointment date for inspection/copying, while the files are being retrieved. If numerous files are identified for one site or if records are voluminous, additional time may also be required for SBCFPD to retrieve the documents. Once files are retrieved and evaluated for any information that cannot be released, a file review appointment can be scheduled. *(Records provided for public review are screened and evaluated for information for which disclosure is not required or is prohibited by law, or for which the interest in non-disclosure clearly outweighs the interest served by disclosure).*

Copies of records can be made by SBCFPD at a charge of 25 cents per page. Also, the individual who made the request can bring a portable copier or digital camera to the file review appointment, or can arrange for a private copy service to come on site and make the copies. Be advised that we are unable to authorize removal of original records from this office.