

Why No Gas Stations At Lake Berryessa?

L.U.S.T. is to blame. No, not one of the Seven Deadly Sins. According to Roman Catholic theology, the seven deadly sins are: greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath, and sloth. But the L.U.S.T. that killed all the gas stations at the lake were the Leaking Underground Storage Tank.

Many of us have had to assist motorists over the years of the 1990s who thought they could refill their gas tanks after a day trip to the lake but learned the hard fact: there was no auto gas at Lake Berryessa. I recall driving a motorcycle rider who had ended up at Spanish Flat with an empty tank to his home in Napa to get his motorcycle trailer.

Congress created the Superfund in 1980 aimed at paying for clean-up of contaminated toxic chemical sites, including LUST sites. Most of the Superfund activity occurred in the late 1980s and 1990s. The primary culprit for gas stations was obviously gasoline and its components, especially MTBE.

This is the period when Lake Berryessa lost all of its gas stations because it was too expensive for the owners to install the required double-walled leakproof gasoline storage tanks, especially when there was little profit in auto gas sales. Almost every business and resort at that time had a gasoline station with underground tanks. The gas at the stores was a loss leader to attract customers. The boat gas at the resorts was high priced but a required service for boating customers. Many boaters simply filled up their tanks in surrounding cities before coming to the lake. Boats stored in the marinas or dry boat storage areas did not have that option.



Leaking Underground Storage Tank Program Closes at Steele Park - 2011

After almost 14 years of remediation, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board confirmed the completion of site investigation and corrective action for the underground storage tanks located at the former Steele Park Marina.

Steele Park L.U.S.T Cleanup Status History

4/10/1998: Open - Case Begin Date

4/10/1998: Open - Site Assessment

12/12/2000: Open - Site Assessment

4/5/2002: Open - Remediation

9/13/2002: Open - Site Assessment

5/6/2008: Open - Remediation

5/28/2009: Open - Verification Monitoring

12/8/2011: Completed - Case Closed

MTBE can be removed from water sources by relying on the capacity of certain chemicals (e.g., hydrogen peroxide combined with iron) to rapidly oxidize organic molecules in water. MTBE gives water an unpleasant taste at very low concentrations, and thus can render large quantities of groundwater non-potable. MTBE is often introduced into water-supply aquifers by leaking underground storage tanks (USTs) at gasoline stations or by gasoline containing MTBE spilled onto the ground.

Leaking Underground Storage Tanks Site	Date Opened	Date Closed
Berryessa Marina Resort	1/12/96	7/2/01
Bureau Of Reclamation	4/5/91	9/12/91
CDF Spanish Flat Station	1/4/89	5/27/97
Corners Service Station	10/18/91	11/27/10
Lakeside Market	3/5/99	7/31/07
Markley Cove Resort	11/6/91	9/7/93
Pleasure Cove Resort	1/16/92	6/24/98
Pope Valley Garage	5/5/99	11/13/09
Pridmore Construction	4/9/90	10/20/91
Putah Creek Park	9/4/90	11/16/09
Rancho Monticello	3/18/86	2/21/07
Spanish Flat Marina	4/30/90	5/23/93
Spanish Flat Service	1/13/93	11/1/93
Spanish Flat Yard	1/28/91	12/18/07
Steele Park Marina	4/10/98	12/8/11
Sugarloaf Park	11/7/97	3/10/08
Turtle Rock	11/28/94	6/25/02

The Moskowite Corners gas station was polluting the soil and groundwater moving below the nearby Capell Valley Estates mobile home park. The residents of the mobile home park were not in any danger. A soil vapor investigation was conducted to evaluate the potential for migration of gasoline vapors into indoor air. The results showed that vapors from the groundwater would not impact indoor air.