


Micro-Electronics Manufacturing Facility



Anthony Brown was retained by the owner of a property that was leased to a printed circuit board and micro-electronics manufacturer, located in Escondido, California. The facility had operated as a micro-electronics business since being initially developed as a light industrial property in the 1970s. The facility included a wastewater treatment plant to recover metals from the spent process waters. Chlorinated solvents (trichloroethene [TCE], tetrachloroethene [PCE], and 1,1,1-trichloroethane [1,1,1-TCA]) were used extensively as part of business operations; however, there was no treatment for solvents in the wastewater.

Based on site operational history and detections of solvents and metals in sewer discharge samples, the San Diego County Health Department requested a site investigation. Initial samples detected solvents and metals in shallow soil samples and groundwater. The case was then referred to the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and shortly thereafter, the manufacturing business leasing the property filed for bankruptcy. The owner of the property then took over site investigation and remediation activities and filed a lawsuit against the facility operators, suppliers of chemicals used in the operation, and the supplier of the wastewater treatment plant. The work scope included, but was not limited to, the following:

- Review of site operational history, focusing on the use of solvents and the operation of the wastewater plant;
- Field investigations to confirm, characterize, and delineate the extent of soil and groundwater contamination, including regional fracture delineation mapping, and discretely-screened monitoring wells in granitic bedrock;
- Development of a site hydrogeological conceptual model to evaluate contaminant fate and transport model;
- Excavation of contaminated soil beneath the wastewater plant;
- Design of soil and groundwater remediation systems to address contamination beneath the site and adjacent properties; and
- Litigation support, including preparation of an expert report, deposition, and trial testimony.