

# News Release



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Former Prescott Convenience Store Owner to Pay Up To \$400,000 in Underground Storage Tank Settlement at 10 Sites in State**

PHOENIX (June 8, 2010) – The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and Arizona Attorney General's Office announced today that the owner of a former Prescott convenience store and its affiliates have agreed to pay up to \$400,000 in cleanup costs and penalties in a settlement involving underground storage tanks in Prescott and nine other sites around the state.

In a consent judgment filed in Maricopa County Superior Court, Rick Bell Oil Company and Bell Gas of Arizona, Inc. agreed to pay a \$100,000 penalty during the next year for the Prescott site. Bell Gas Inc. will secure a certificate of deposit for up to \$300,000 to guarantee Rick Bell Oil Company and Bell Gas of Arizona, Inc. clean the remaining nine sites.

The primary focus of the investigation was the former Buddy's Market in Prescott, located at 1310 Iron Springs Road. Investigators documented that more than 1,000 gallons of gasoline leaked from the underground storage tank system.

The other sites where cleanups are being conducted are Jobi's Market, 4520 Highway 191 in Safford; Buckaroo Roundup, 1496 Highway 69 in Chino Valley; Blue Hills Market/Blue Ridge Market, 210 S. Highway 69 in Dewey-Humboldt; Willow Valley Liquors, 8045 S. Highway 95 in Mohave Valley; MC Minit Mart, 869 N. Grande in Nogales; and Gordon Hills Station, Highway 75 in York. Cleanups also are being conducted at the former businesses Bullshipper, 19282 John Wayne Parkway in Maricopa; Sunset Liquors, 416 London Bridge in Lake Havasu City; and Ray Bell #416, 420 S. Arizona Blvd. in Coolidge.

The State Assurance Fund (SAF) has traditionally reimbursed owners of leaking underground storage tanks for 90 percent of cleanup costs. But the fund is scheduled to end June 30 and it is unclear if SAF money will be available for use in this case.

"These were serious, long-standing violations of environmental law," ADEQ Director Benjamin H. Grumbles said. "Maintaining safe underground storage tanks is good for business because it protects public health and saves money over the long run."

"Owners of fuel storage tanks need to rigorously comply with state standards to protect the health of our citizens and our environment," Attorney General Terry Goddard said.