

DIANNE FEINSTEIN  
CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY  
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0604

<http://feinstein.senate.gov>

August 25, 2006

# COPY

Ms. Maureen Gorsen  
Director, Department of Toxic Substances Control  
P.O. Box 806  
Sacramento, CA 95812-0806

Dear Director Gorsen:

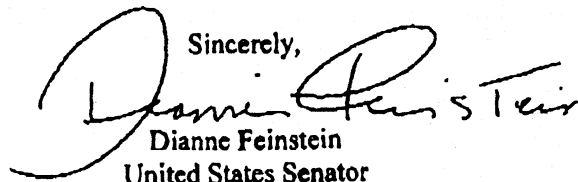
This letter is to respectfully request your investigation into a matter of serious concern regarding a tract of homes known as Country Hills in the city of Torrance, California. This area, which covers 125 acres on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, was formerly known as the Disposal Gardens Waste Site and is immediately adjacent to the Palos Verdes Landfill. This site was used as a dump for petroleum wastes from the late 1960's through the early 1980's. I am deeply concerned that residents who live in these homes are at serious risk due to toxic exposures from both the Disposal Garden itself and groundwater that, according to a recent Los Angeles County Sanitation District report, may be leaching from the Palos Verdes Landfill.

There are reports of a variety of possible exposure sources, including substances which bubble up from cracks in basements, foundations, driveways, walls, and lawns around homes in Country Hills. Residents report foul smelling gases and unusually colored water flowing down streets along curbs, even when rainfall has not occurred. Reports documented throughout the 1970's and early 1980's show the presence of gases, water damage, and other problems in area homes. Official documents from the City of Torrance during this same time period record problems with containment mechanisms in the Disposal Garden itself. More recently, a 2006 CIWMB report determined many topographic and waste pit problems that remain uninvestigated.

I am very concerned, therefore, that residents are being exposed to contaminated liquids and vapors. To determine their potential risk, it is imperative that groundwater and vapors be sampled at several locations between Rolling Hills Road and the landfill. Furthermore, because the water table is just below the surface, soil gas sampling may be impractical and the best measure of exposure may be indoor air sampling. Studies such as these could easily be incorporated into the Department of Toxic Substance Control Five Year Review of the Palos Verdes Landfill.

I appreciate your attention to this matter of great concern to me and the residents of Country Hills.

Sincerely,

  
Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator