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ADEQ Would Oversee Groundwater Cleanup at Unit of Superfund Site as Part of Consent Decree Filing

PHOENIX (July 30, 2009) – The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality would be given authority to oversee groundwater cleanup in Operable Unit 2 of the Motorola 52nd Street superfund site as part of a consent decree filed Thursday in U.S. District Court.

The proposed decree would shift oversight from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to ADEQ for groundwater cleanup at Operable Unit 2, which involves the companies Freescale Semiconductor Inc., Honeywell International Inc., Aviall Inc., Kachina Technical Services and Processes, and Joray Corp. Operable Unit 2 is located in Central Phoenix on the northwest corner of 20th Street and Washington Street, just north of Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport.

“This is a win-win for the environment and all the parties working to speed up the cleanup,” said ADEQ Director Benjamin H. Grumbles. “ADEQ is better positioned to lead local oversight and response, EPA is able to support efforts at a nationally significant superfund site, and the companies have a more effective and efficient process to get the job done.”

Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard also said that he was happy with the proposed consent decree.

"I am pleased that these companies will take responsibility to clean up the groundwater polluted in the 52nd Street superfund site. The health of our environment and our communities is a top priority of ADEQ and my office," Goddard said. "This settlement will not only save Arizonans millions in clean-up costs but, most importantly, it will help ensure that generations of Arizonans have access to safe, clean groundwater resources."

The Superfund site has been on the National Priorities List since 1989 and is divided into three operable units for ease of clean-up and oversight. In 1999, EPA entered into a judicial order with the companies for the construction and operation of a groundwater treatment system for Operable Unit 2. The consent decree lays out requirements for the operation and maintenance of the treatment system.

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Since the Motorola 52nd Street site is under federal auspices, ADEQ will still consult regularly with EPA and EPA will provide guidance and assistance as needed. Since the Operable Unit 2 treatment system began operation in 2001, more than 7.86 billion gallons of water have been treated, and a total of nearly 10,800 pounds of volatile organic compounds have been removed.

There will be a 30-day public comment period before the consent decree can be finalized. ADEQ will give notice to the public regarding the comment period. Anyone wishing to comment can submit comments in writing to the court with a copy submitted to the director of ADEQ and the settling parties. All correspondence should refer to Case # CV 07-01989-PHX-SRB.

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