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## EPA orders Aerojet to implement cleanup plan

Celia Lamb

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has issued an order to Aerojet to implement a 30-year, \$124 million plan for cleaning up contaminated groundwater flowing from the Western side of Aerojet's property.

The order enforces a cleanup plan released in July 2001 by the EPA. The EPA issued the order Friday after negotiations with Aerojet on a consent decree to start the cleanup fell apart in mid-July. About 5,500 acres of Aerojet's land is included in the federal Superfund program, which regulates cleanup of many of the nation's toxic hot-spots.

Groundwater contaminated with rocket fuel components perchlorate and NDMA and the solvent trichloroethylene has been moving steadily west from Aerojet's property. The EPA's order requires Aerojet to prevent more drinking water wells on Aerojet's west side from becoming contaminated. About 18 wells in Rancho Cordova have been closed due to groundwater contamination, though it's not clear how many are due to the plumes addressed in the EPA's order.

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board engineer Alex MacDonald said it's still not clear whether stipulations in the new order requiring Aerojet to replace water from lost wells have priority over a groundwater replacement plan that Aerojet has been negotiating with the water board and the EPA as a stipulation of an earlier consent decree that allowed Aerojet to carve out 3,200 acres of its land from the Superfund site.

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