



Katherine Douglas

General Public Comment

From: Daren Mann <darenmann@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 7, 2026 2:53 PM
To: akzin@sbcapcd.org
Cc: hmaldonado@sbunified.org; lchavez@goleta.k12.ca.us; dist_board@sbunified.org; Laura Capps; sbcob; Roy Lee; Joan Hartmann; info@independent.com; news@noozhawk.com; Assemblymember.Hart@assembly.ca.gov; Senator.Limon@senate.ca.gov
Subject: Formal Opposition to Permit to Operate 16542 – Contaminated Soil Cleanup Project at 125 S. San Marcos Road

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Dear Mr. Akzin,

I am writing to formally and strongly oppose Permit to Operate 16542 related to the proposed excavation, handling, and transport of arsenic-contaminated soil at 125 S. San Marcos Road.

I am the parent of three children currently attending El Camino Elementary School — one child in third grade and twins in kindergarten — and my family lives nearby. I am deeply concerned about the health, safety, environmental, traffic, air-quality, and quality-of-life impacts this project may impose on surrounding families and students.

The proposed excavation and transport of approximately 1,750 cubic yards of arsenic-impacted soil within 1,000 feet of both El Camino Elementary School and San Marcos High School raises extremely serious concerns regarding airborne toxic exposure to children, cumulative environmental impacts, trucking activity near schools, and long-term public-health liability.

In addition to the environmental concerns, I have already observed what appears to be deteriorating traffic and construction safety conditions around the school associated with ongoing construction activity in the area.

Directly across from El Camino Elementary during school drop-off this morning, I personally was in a near accident involving a cement truck entering the construction zone. I was riding my long-tail bike with both of my 6-year old twins on the back during drop-off while families and children were actively arriving at school. The cement truck driver began making a left-hand turn into the site, abruptly stopped mid-turn, and then restarted movement in the middle of active school traffic circulation, creating a dangerous and chaotic situation near students, cyclists, and parents.

This incident reinforced my concern that construction activity adjacent to a school is not currently being managed with an appropriate level of caution, coordination, or sensitivity to the realities of school drop-off and pickup conditions. I am extremely concerned that adding excavation operations, contaminated soil hauling (the street is constantly dirty and the dust flows directly into the kindergarten play area all-day long), and a substantial increase in heavy truck traffic will further compound these safety risks for children and families in the immediate area.

More broadly, I am deeply concerned that recent state-driven housing densification policies and streamlined development pathways have significantly reduced meaningful local oversight and community input regarding the cumulative impacts of large-scale residential development near schools and established residential neighborhoods. The rapid concentration of high-density construction activity in this area is already creating observable traffic, safety, environmental, and quality-of-life impacts that many nearby families believe have not been adequately planned for or mitigated.

Additionally, I, along with other concerned parents in the community, have already begun documenting unsafe construction-related conditions and impacts occurring near El Camino Elementary School, including:

- Unsafe truck behavior during school drop-off and pickup periods
- Dust events near student and pedestrian areas
- School-hour traffic conflicts involving construction vehicles
- Blocked or partially obstructed crossing and pedestrian areas
- Idling trucks adjacent to school routes and family traffic patterns

These issues are already degrading the safety environment surrounding El Camino Elementary, and many of us are deeply concerned that the proposed contaminated soil excavation and hauling operations will significantly worsen these conditions.

At this time, I do not believe the District has demonstrated that nearby students, residents, teachers, and staff can be adequately protected from:

- Airborne contaminated dust during excavation and loading
- Wind-driven particulate migration
- Truck emissions and roadway contamination
- Accidental releases during transport
- Increased heavy vehicle conflicts near school traffic
- Long-term cumulative exposure risks to children and sensitive populations

Children are recognized as sensitive receptors under California environmental and public-health frameworks, and I believe substantially greater scrutiny is warranted before any permit is approved.

Accordingly, I request the following before any permit approval or project activity proceeds:

1. Full public disclosure of all environmental, toxicology, soil sampling, air-quality, and risk assessment reports associated with the site.
2. Independent third-party air monitoring during all excavation and hauling activities, including real-time particulate monitoring and arsenic-specific testing, with public reporting requirements.
3. Clearly defined stop-work thresholds and mandatory shutdown procedures during elevated wind conditions or any exceedance of air-quality thresholds.
4. Full disclosure of haul routes, trucking schedules, traffic-control plans, dust mitigation protocols, contingency plans, and school-hour operational impacts.
5. Formal evaluation of alternative remediation approaches that could reduce or eliminate airborne exposure risks near schools.
6. A public hearing and expanded community review process prior to any permit approval.

7. Comprehensive review of cumulative environmental, traffic, and public-health impacts under applicable California environmental review requirements, including impacts on nearby schools and residential neighborhoods.

Please also consider this letter a request that all comments, supporting documentation, technical analyses, mitigation measures, and agency responses associated with this permit application be preserved as part of the administrative record.

I also respectfully request written confirmation that this correspondence has been received, reviewed, and incorporated into the administrative record associated with Permit to Operate 16542.

Given the seriousness of the concerns raised — particularly those involving student safety, traffic conflicts near an active elementary school, airborne contamination risks, and ongoing construction-related safety issues already being observed by nearby families — I further request a written response outlining what actions, additional reviews, mitigation measures, investigations, or procedural steps the District intends to take in response to the concerns identified in this letter and by affected community members.

Please also advise whether additional public comment opportunities, hearings, or review periods are anticipated as part of this process. I'm very interested in making my voice heard and hearing from my fellow neighbors - can you let me know?

I intend to continue closely monitoring this matter and evaluating all available administrative, environmental, and legal avenues to ensure the health and safety of nearby children and residents are fully protected.

I strongly urge the District to deny Permit to Operate 16542 or, at minimum, substantially delay approval pending further independent review and public process.

Sincerely,

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