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**LOCAL BUILDERS TO PAY \$125,000 SETTLEMENT IN THE MISHANDLING AND DISPOSAL OF AN UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK AND HAZARDOUS WASTE**

Santa Cruz County District Attorney Jeffrey S. Rosell, announced today that the Santa Cruz County Superior Court has ordered Green Valley Corporation dba Barry Swenson Builders, Inc., to pay \$125,000 as part of a settlement of a civil-environmental prosecution.

According to the District Attorney's complaint filed with the Court, Barry Swenson Builders improperly handled and disposed of an underground storage tank and related hazardous waste on March 1, 2016. This information was identified following notification by Barry Swenson Builders to the County and subsequent inspections conducted by investigators from the County of Santa Cruz Health Services Agency - Environmental Health Division at a construction site at Aptos Village in which Barry Swenson Builders was acting as the general contractor.

Following notification, Barry Swenson Builders hired an environmental consultant to perform subsequent soil testing, obtained permits for the removal of the tank, performed remediation of the site, paid a fine and conducted employee training regarding the proper handling of underground storage tanks. On June 30, 2016, the County of Santa Cruz Health Services Agency - Environmental Health Division issued a letter stating that no remaining detected chemical concentrations exceed applicable levels and there was no further action needed at that time.

Under the Court order, Barry Swenson Builders must pay \$94,465 in civil penalties, \$10,000 in restitution, \$435 in court fees, and \$20,100 to reimburse the costs of the investigation, designed to prevent Barry Swenson Builders from committing similar violations in the future. These amounts are in addition to the administrative penalty Barry Swenson Builders paid to the Environmental Health Division.

Prosecutor Ed Browne indicated that Barry Swenson Builders cooperated fully throughout the investigation and quickly responded to enhance their policies and procedures designed to eliminate the improper disposal of underground storage tanks and hazardous wastes at its construction sites, including additional training for their personnel. Barry Swenson Builder also cooperated fully with the Environmental Health Division and complied with all of its directives in cleaning up the site at its sole expense. The Division issued a "No Further Action Closure" letter on June 30, 2016, stating that no further remediation of the site is needed.

District Attorney Rosell stated "It's a top priority for our office to ensure environmental regulations are closely followed. Today's settlement is a significant example to set and illustrates that our office will hold businesses accountable for any unlawful actions, and in protecting the environment and the citizens of Santa Cruz County."