

State Attorney General Kamala D. Harris recently filed a civil lawsuit against BP West Coast Products, BP Products North America, Inc. and Atlantic Richfield Company for allegedly violating state laws governing hazardous materials and hazardous waste.

Harris says the companies failed to properly inspect and maintain underground tanks used to store gasoline for retail sale at more than 780 gas stations in California – including two locations in San Leandro.

“Safe storage of gasoline is not only common sense, it is essential to protecting the integrity of California’s groundwater resources,” Harris said.

Harris was joined in this enforcement by Alameda County District Attorney Nancy E. O’Malley and several other district attorneys from counties all over California.

The complaint filed earlier this month in Alameda County Superior Court alleges that, since October 2006, the BP companies and ARCO have improperly monitored, inspected and maintained underground storage tanks used to store gasoline for retail sale.

The complaint also alleges that the defendants tampered with or disabled leak detection devices, and failed to test secondary containment systems, conduct monthly inspections, train employees in proper protocol, and maintain operational alarm systems, among other violations.

The lawsuit also alleges that the defendants improperly handled and disposed of hazardous wastes and materials associated with the underground storage tanks at retail gas stations throughout the state.

The suit follows a recent statewide investigation led by Harris's office, which found violations of hazardous materials and hazardous waste laws and regulations at BP gas stations in 37 counties across the state.