

**Former Harlem Equity Co-op Bulk Plant  
Fact Sheet  
January 2005**

In 1969, the facility began operation as a petroleum bulk plant.

In March 1997, a petroleum release was reported when fuel was discovered seeping out of the ground near the dispenser islands. Subsequent investigation identified the source of the release as multiple holes rusted through underground steel product piping attached to above-ground storage tanks.

In August 1997, the Petroleum Tank Release Compensation Board (PTRCB) deemed the release ineligible for funding due to multiple violations of petroleum storage tank requirements.

In 1998, Equity Co-op conducted an initial investigation of the petroleum release and recovered 300 gallons of free product (mixed gasoline & diesel).

In 1999, Equity Co-op discontinued remediation work and abandoned the property due to financial insolvency and lack of PTRCB funding.

DEQ explored using federal Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Trust funds to remediate this site, but the facility does not meet the requirements of the federal LUST definition.

In 1999, DEQ received \$100,000 in Environmental Contingency Account funds through an executive order of the Governor. DEQ completed additional investigation and monitoring using these funds. DEQ also replaced a 3-inch diameter PVC water main that was threatened by contact with high concentrations of petroleum contaminated soil and groundwater. This funding helped identify and resolve this immediate risk, but it was not adequate to remediate the entire site and resolve all of the long-term risks.

PVC water mains and rubber gaskets are susceptible to chemical permeation by petroleum. DEQ has seen this permeation of pressurized water mains in other communities along the High Line such as in Big Sandy, which is in the same geologic environment as Harlem. Even though the water main in Big Sandy was pressurized, contamination permeated through the pipe and gasket walls and into the water being served to the public.

An 8-inch diameter City of Harlem water main is also present near this site and remains threatened. Petroleum contamination has not reached this PVC water main yet, but is estimated to be approximately 50 feet away at this time. If the petroleum contamination is not cleaned up and it reaches this water main, replacement costs may be considerable. Significant contamination, including free-floating gasoline and diesel fuel, are present on the water table, which is flowing toward this water main.

The Harlem Equity Co-op has ceased business, liquidated their property improvements, and abandoned this property. Property taxes have not been paid since 1999 and are delinquent in the amount of approximately \$5,100.

Without funding for cleanup, it is almost certain that that this property will remain abandoned indefinitely. If funding were available for cleanup, it is much more likely that the property would be redeveloped and brought back onto the tax rolls.

Other than a successful RDG, there are no other sources of funding to remediate this site that DEQ is aware of.