

Contact:
SCOTT S. SLATER
GRA Board Member
(805) 882-1420

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GROUNDWATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION APPLAUDS
“60 MINUTES” STORY ON MtBE CONTAMINATION

January 17, 2000

Sacramento, California: On Monday, January 17, the Board of Directors of the Groundwater Resources Association of California (GRA) adopted a resolution renewing its request for an immediate ban on the fuel additive MtBE in California. The resolution was adopted on the heels of a January 16th “60 Minutes” story concerning the wide-spread groundwater contamination caused by leaks and spills of the additive.

MtBE, when added to gasoline, has acknowledged benefits to improve air quality. However, it is highly soluble in water and, as reported by “60 Minutes,” has become the nation’s second largest source of groundwater contamination.

Last year, GRA endorsed Governor Davis’ decision to phase out MtBE. The “60 Minutes” exposé is further evidence of the need for immediate action to establish standards for the chemical additive.

GRA Board President Timothy Parker warned that “the wide-spread MtBE contamination appears to be of catastrophic proportions. The problem is symptomatic of our failure to understand the full magnitude of the health risks associated with commercial chemicals before they are introduced into the environment,” says Parker.

“When one considers the level of review provided to chemicals that are ingested in food before they are authorized by the Food and Drug Administration, it is amazing how little consideration is given to something with such an obvious potential to contaminate our water supply,” said Parker.

The GRA Board urged continued state and federal legislative support for Governor Davis’ effort to ban MtBE and for the adoption of *immediate* standards for MtBE in drinking water.

GRA is a multi-disciplinary professional organization dedicated to the study and protection of groundwater resources and is comprised of 700 members state-wide.