

New date for water plant

by **Diana Balazs** - Apr. 13, 2008 12:00 AM
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A target date for the restart of [Arizona](#) American's facility in Scottsdale to treat groundwater contaminated with trichloroethylene, a suspected cancer-causing chemical, has come and gone.

Arizona American Water Co. and Motorola Inc., the main business responsible for cleaning up the contamination, must work out agreements in order to bring the facility back on line.

The goal was to restart the plant by late March. It remains shut down.

The new target date is the end of April, said Paula Thornton-Greear, spokeswoman for Motorola and other businesses participating in the cleanup.

"This is a priority for us," she said.

The Participating Companies (Motorola, Siemens and GlaxoSmithKline) are obligated to clean up the contaminated groundwater at what is known as the North Indian Bend Wash Superfund Site.

Motorola is responsible for conducting the effort on behalf of the "participating companies."

Trichloroethylene, or TCE, is an industrial solvent that was dumped decades ago, contaminating the wash's underground aquifer.

In January, a malfunctioning blower at Arizona American's TCE treatment plant at Miller Road and McDonald Drive in [Scottsdale](#) caused untreated water containing more than four times the federally mandated level of TCE to flow into Arizona American's water-distribution lines.

That resulted in a three-day ban on using the water for drinking and for food preparation, affecting nearly 5,000 Arizona American residential and commercial customers in Paradise Valley and Scottsdale.

The plan is for Arizona American and Motorola to run the facility jointly to remove TCE from contaminated groundwater pumped from wells.

Arizona American spokesman Todd Walker said Arizona American continues to work with Motorola on agreements to operate the Miller Road treatment facility.

Arizona American has disconnected the well most contaminated with TCE and will not use it again as a source of drinking water. It wants to continue treating two of its wells that contain lesser amounts of TCE.

Arizona American has treated the most contaminated well known as PCX-1 through an agreement with Motorola. Motorola has been identified as the primary source of the TCE contamination.

But the well must still be pumped to help contain a plume of TCE from spreading in the North Indian Bend Wash Aquifer. Motorola wanted to begin pumping that well by March 24.

The plan is to treat it, remove the TCE, and disperse the treated water into the Arizona Canal.

The U.S. [Environmental](#) Protection Agency and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality must approve a plan to do so.