

[Press Releases](#)

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ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN FILES LAWSUIT AGAINST COOK COUNTY GAS STATION OVER GASOLINE LEAK***Madigan Asks Court to Ensure Cleanup Work Continues***

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today filed a lawsuit against Land Mart Inc. (Land Mart) over a gasoline leak at a Cook County Gas Depot station that resulted in soil and groundwater contamination and caused residents to complain about gasoline odors.

Madigan filed the complaint and motion for immediate and preliminary injunction in Cook County Circuit Court against Land Mart, which operates the Gas Depot gas station located at 15 E. Sibley Blvd. in South Holland, Ill. Madigan is asking the court to require Land Mart to continue air and groundwater monitoring at and around the gas station, including in the sewers, and investigate and address any contamination from the gasoline release.

On Oct. 24, the South Holland Fire Department responded to a home near the South Holland Gas Depot after residents reported smelling gasoline. Power was shut off; the house was ventilated, and firefighters flushed the sewer line. Residents, however, spent the night at a hotel. State investigators traced the fumes, via the sewer system, to the Gas Depot station. An estimated 660 gallons of gasoline had leaked from one of the station's underground storage tanks.

In the following days, firefighters responded to complaints related to gasoline fumes at additional homes and a car customization shop near the station. A consultant hired by Land Mart pumped approximately 32,000 gallons of groundwater contaminated by gasoline from the site, and additional cleanup is ongoing. On Oct. 27, the Office of the State Fire Marshal ordered the South Holland Gas Depot to take all tank systems out of service until the tanks passed integrity testing. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency referred the case to the Attorney General's Office for prosecution.

"This lawsuit requires Land Mart to remediate the gasoline contamination from the leak and assure the residents and businesses located near the South Holland Gas Depot that the air and water in their homes and businesses is safe," Madigan said.

Gasoline is highly flammable and can migrate through soil and sewer systems into basements, crawl space cracks and pipes to create inhalation and explosion hazards. In the complaint, Madigan asked the court to require Land Mart to take steps to control any gasoline released at the site and to continue working to evaluate and remediate any soil or groundwater contamination. The lawsuit also asks for civil penalties.

Supervising Attorney Rebecca Burlingham and Assistant Attorneys General Stephen Sylvester, Jamie Getz, and Daniel Rottenberg are handling the case for Madigan's Environmental Bureau.

-30-

[Return to November 2017 Press Releases](#)