

POSTED ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2009:

Public meeting about groundwater contamination near the North Wake Landfill

There's nothing to love about a leaking landfill

By Lisa Sorg

If you were to excavate the trash of the late 1980s and early 1990s, you might find cracked Rubik's Cubes and soiled Pampers, broken televisions and half-empty paint cans, crushed nozzles of roach foggers and bottles of weed killer.

Beginning in 1986, for more than 10 years, Wake County residents tossed their garbage—some innocuous, some hazardous—in bins that sanitation workers then hauled to the North Wake Landfill, which, when it closed in 1997, held 1.4 million tons of trash.

That particular 44-acre landfill—later there were three on the site near Durant Road, north of I-540—was unlined, as the construction of lined landfills wasn't required by the state until 1998. So the lead in the TV tubes, the cypermethrin in the pesticides, the vinyl chloride in paint and the 2,4-D in the herbicides could leak and over the years worm its way into the fractured bedrock and eventually into the groundwater, which can move several yards or, depending on the geology, several miles.

"It's unfortunate, but not uncommon," said Tommy Esqueda, Wake County director of environmental services. "Now we have programs for electronics, paint, herbicides and pesticides so they don't go in the landfill, but not then."

Wake County and state environmental officials—and citizens themselves—are paying the wages of previous environmental sins. Several years ago, low levels of contamination—although higher than the state's allowable levels for groundwater—were detected in monitoring wells near the old landfill.

State and local environmental officials say the contamination, which, according to county documents, includes lead, mercury, beryllium, cadmium, herbicides and pesticides, hasn't reached a nearby creek. Nor does it threaten drinking water, they say, because nearby residents are on city water and not well. Nonetheless, the cleanup could cost upward of \$800,000 and take as long as 30 years.

County officials are hosting a public meeting Friday to tell residents about the contamination, explain the cleanup options and receive feedback about the plan. After the meeting, county staff will choose a cleanup option, which must be approved by the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources (N.C. DENR).

State and county officials are recommending using monitored natural attenuation (MNA) and air sparging to reduce the amount of contamination in the groundwater. Under MNA, monitoring wells will be sampled semiannually to detect any change in the amount or type of contamination, as well as its path. Air sparging, explains Esqueda, injects air into the groundwater system. Oxygen creates an environment that helps break down the materials.

According to Wake County documents, capital costs for the two methods combined is an estimated \$436,000. Operating

If you go

What: Public meeting about groundwater contamination and clean up near the North Wake Landfill, which closed in 1997

Where: Pullen House, 10801 Durant Road, Raleigh ([Google map](#))

When: Friday, Oct. 2, 4:30 to 7 p.m.

Why: Contamination above permitted state levels was detected in monitoring wells outside the property boundaries of the landfill. The contaminants include cadmium, lead, chromium, vinyl chloride, herbicides and pesticides.

More info: Download PDF documents related to the contamination and proposed clean up:

- [Discussion of contamination](#) (479 KB)
- [Discussion of possible clean up](#) (469 KB)
- [Frequently asked questions](#) (74 KB)
- [Landfill post-closure plan](#) (1.4 MB)
- [Monitoring well results](#) (347 KB)
- [Well location map](#) (439 KB)

and maintenance costs are projected at \$426,000 over 30 years, not accounting for inflation.

The cleanup won't affect Wake County and Raleigh's plan to convert part of the 116-acre landfill site, primarily the buffer area, into parkland, including walking trails. The unlined landfill is fenced and locked, and no portion of the park will be in that area, county officials said.

Most of the state's 128 unlined landfills leak, said Ed Mussler, permitting branch supervisor for the solid waste section of the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Division of Waste Management. About half of those landfills remain open.

A more immediate threat occurred at the unlined landfill in December 2007, when higher than allowable concentrations of potentially explosive methane gas was detected in gas monitoring wells. An explosion could devastate nearby subdivisions and schools. Subsequently, the county installed a ring of gas extraction wells that decreased the methane concentrations and routed the gas next door to pharmaceutical company Tyco, which uses it to supplement natural gas in operating its boilers.

Shortly before the unlined landfill closed, Wake County opened a 70-acre lined landfill on the same land. It contained 4.85 million tons of trash when it closed in 2008. A five-acre landfill for construction and demolition debris, the smallest of the three, operated from 2000 to 2003 and held 120,000 tons.

Wake County trash now is hauled to the South Wake Landfill near Holly Springs.

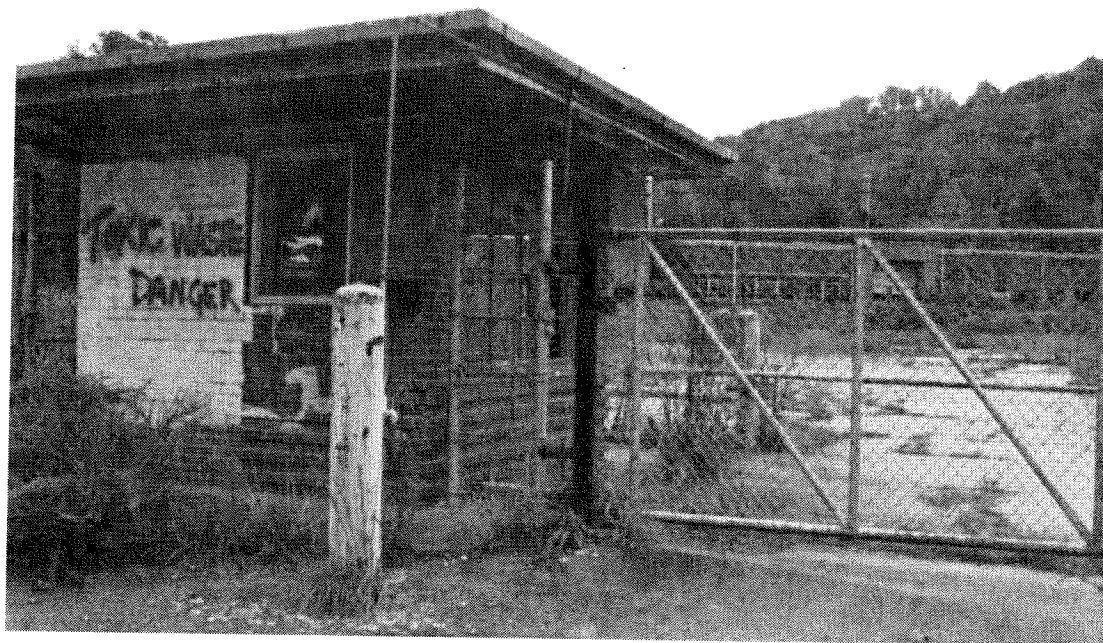
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Flowing through the Cracks The CTS Site in Skyland, North Carolina

Lenny Siegel
February 2009

The 57-acre CTS Asheville site on Mills Gap Road in Skyland, Buncombe County, North Carolina (just outside of Asheville), is a prime example of a hazardous waste site where the problem slipped through the cracks of the regulatory system. Large quantities of trichloroethylene (TCE) and other contaminants were released into the environment from the 1950s through the 1980s, and residents reported serious health consequences—that they believe are connected with toxic exposures—at least as early as 1990. In the early 2000s, new housing was built on a portion of the original property. However, no cleanup actions were taken until 2006. Since then, investigation has accelerated, but the response still appears fragmented and insufficient.

On September 17, 2008, I toured the area impacted by the releases and met with a small number of local activists. In the evening I conducted a briefing and led a discussion among about 25 people, including local officials, scientists from a local university, and a newspaper reporter who has covered the site. I concluded that this site should be elevated to the “Superfund” National Priorities List (NPL) as soon as possible.



CTS from the Mills Gap Road Entrance

Site History

International Resistance Corporation, later absorbed by Northrop Grumman, operated an electroplating plant on the site from about 1952 to 1959. CTS of Asheville, a subsidiary of Elkhart, Indiana-based CTS Corporation, manufactured switches and other electronic parts there from 1959 until 1985. In 1987 local investors, Mills Gap Road Associates (MGRA), purchased the property, reportedly leasing it to former CTS employees (Arden Electroplating) for electroplating, then for the manufacturing of corn-burning stoves, and later for warehousing. In 1997 they sold about 45 acres,

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More testing of Duracell site ordered by county

By [Heather J. Smith](#)
The Dispatch

Published: Tuesday, May 12, 2009 at 11:38 p.m.
Last Modified: Tuesday, May 12, 2009 at 11:38 p.m.

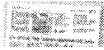
The Davidson County Board of Commissioners, at their meeting Tuesday night, approved a second phase of environmental testing at the former Duracell building on U.S. Highway 64 East, where the county is considering expanding the county jail.

Commissioners approved the testing by a 5-2 vote.

A jail committee, made up of county, law enforcement and judicial officials, recommended the Duracell site on the condition that additional testing finds contamination is at a safe level. The Environmental Protection Agency and the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources ordered a series of cleanup efforts of the former battery manufacturing facility.

“My question to those on the committee,” Commissioner Larry Potts said, “have you have gotten the same calls I did from former employees and those familiar with the site asking what would happen if someone who spent time in the jail later got cancer and decided to sue the county?”

Residents raised concerns that contamination still posed a threat and protested the county spending \$35,000 or more to test a property the county may not purchase.



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A Matter of Opinion

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Editorial: EPA owes more to residents of McCook Field

By the Dayton Daily News | Monday, July 20, 2009, 12:17 AM



(McCook Field neighbors produced this video about the TCE spill)

Dayton has a nasty environmental mess on its hands. The problem deserves faster action and more responsiveness from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The EPA should do what Dayton's well-regarded Environmental Advisory Board has asked: provide extra protection to more than 400 homeowners.

In the ground beneath the McCook Field neighborhood is a huge plume of contamination that includes trichloroethylene, or TCE, a solvent that apparently leaked from a former Chrysler plant that is now home to Behr Dayton Thermal Products. TCE is a suspected carcinogen. Its effects on human health are not well understood.

More than 200 homes already have had special vacuum systems installed to suck out potentially dangerous vapors. With the systems, the EPA believes the homeowners are safe. They are designed to keep indoor air safe by redirecting TCE fumes to the outdoors.

But neighbors want — and deserve — better assurance than that. In a YouTube video, activists make the case for the EPA to conduct regular testing of the air inside affected homes that have the vacuum systems. (Keep in mind that some houses needed a second vacuum system to bring the vapor levels down far enough, and, as the plume migrates, concentrations can change.)

The city's Environmental Advisory Board has been asking for nearly a year for testing to be extended beyond the usual one-year period. It cites federal law that it says makes residents eligible for an extension. EPA officials say they are still considering the idea, and they don't

ABOUT A MATTER OF OPINION

This is the blog of the Dayton Daily News editorial page. Regular contributors include the journalists who work on the two-page section labeled "Opinions" in the paper. But the blog is also a forum for readers. We comment on subjects that are being written about in the newspaper, but other subjects are fair game, too.



Ellen Belcher is the Dayton Daily News opinion pages editor. She writes about state

government, education, the environment, higher education and all things Dayton.



Martin Gottlieb is an editorial writer and columnist for the Dayton Daily News opinion

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Scott Elliott is an editorial writer and columnist for the Dayton Daily News opinion pages. He writes about education, city and suburban issues, politics, business, workforce and consumer issues.

DAYTON OH 10

Report: Beavercreek site still hazardous

City officials are waiting on federal authorities to begin clean up of the former Lammers Barrel location.

By Christopher Magan, Staff Writer

10:45 AM Thursday, October 1, 2009

BEAVERCREEK — The Ohio Department of Health has completed an assessment of a former barrel company by concluding the site continues to pose an “indeterminate public health hazard.”

Lammers Barrel operated from 1953-69 at the corner of Patterson and Grange Hall roads, where the company bought, stored, reclaimed and sold flammable chemical solvents, according to the report. In 1969, a major fire exploded barrels as high as 100 feet in the air. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency later designated the property a Superfund site in need of clean up.

City officials are not involved in the process, said city Engineer Dave Beach. He hopes the EPA will have a remediation plan by 2010.

“The U.S. EPA is running this because it is a Superfund site,” Beach said. He added a round of public input meetings may be held next year.

Investigations found volatile organic compounds, which are known to cause cancer in some cases, had entered nearby water supplies that fed residential wells. In 1986, the EPA hooked residential wells to the county water supply.

The latest report found that additional wells could be impacted if the contamination isn't remediated.

The report suggests more studies to determine the extent of the contamination and to develop a cleanup plan. The possibility of further contamination through vapor intrusion should also be studied.

The full report can be found at the Beavercreek public library, 3618 Dayton-Xenia Road.

Contact this reporter at (937) 225-2342 or cmagan@DaytonDailyNews.com.

Find this article at:

<http://www.daytondailynews.com/news/community/beavercreek/report-beavercreek-site-still-hazardous-325994.html>

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TCE-contaminated homes to undergo testing

BY KRISTEN GAYDOS (STAFF WRITER)

Published: November 20, 2009

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WRIGHT TWP. - Residents' homes affected by the trichloroethylene contamination along Church Road should be tested for vapor intrusion of the chemical early next year, Environmental Protection Agency officials said Thursday.

John Epps, EPA project manager for the contamination cleanup at the former Foster Wheeler site, spoke about the vapor intrusion testing Thursday at a meeting of the Mountain Top Environmental Oversight Board, the community advisory group working with EPA and Foster Wheeler to keep residents involved.

He said a public meeting will be held in January to go over the vapor intrusion process with residents affected by the contamination. About 37 residences on Church Road are affected by the groundwater contamination, which originated at the former Foster Wheeler Energy Corp. site in the Crestwood Industrial Park. The company operated from 1953 to 1984 and used trichloroethene, or TCE, as an industrial degreaser.

The testing is tentatively scheduled to be done in March or April 2010, he said.

"We want everybody to be comfortable with what's going on," Epps said.

Board chair Gene Haverlak asked about the feasibility of that timeline, since vapor intrusion testing is best done in colder months when the air in homes is contained, not during summer months when people tend to open their windows and allow air to circulate.

Foster Wheeler representative Doug Stout assured the residents the company is moving forward as quickly as possible through the planning stages to ensure the testing is done during optimum conditions.

"We want to be in the field and doing the vapor intrusion under ideal conditions," he said.

Epps said Foster Wheeler is scheduled to submit a draft of the work plan to clean up the contamination in December. After EPA reviews the plan, Foster Wheeler will revise the plan before the MTEOB reviews and comments on it and the plan is finalized. That project is expected to finish up in February or March, if everything proceeds according to schedule, Epps said.

Larry Johnson, EPA community involvement coordinator, informed residents he expects to have the community involvement plan completed in January. The plan outlines the framework for the EPA's required outreach activities within the community for about the next three years, "so that we're all on the same page and we know how things are supposed to proceed," he said.

He also said a toxicologist from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry and an expert on TCE will be present to meet with residents one-on-one during the January public meeting. A date has not yet been set for the meeting.

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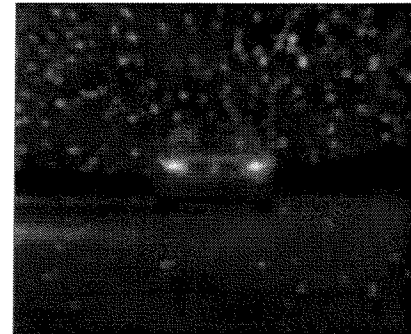
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Fired county human resources director had no resume on file

WILKES-BARRE - Luzerne County does not have a resume on file from former Director of Human Resources Doug Richards, said Sandra A. Zurek, the county's right-to-know officer.

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DEP wants more tests at dorm

King's College allows 165 students to move into new W-B building.

BILL O' BOYLE boboyle@timesleader.com

WILKES-BARRE – The state Department of Environmental Protection Wednesday ordered the drilling of four holes through the foundation slab at the Gateway Corners building – a new King's College dormitory – so soil and groundwater testing can be conducted.

Related headlines

- **Environmental issues raised at W-B building**

Until the test results are in next week, DEP spokesman Mark Carmon said, the department stands by its recommendation that the building not be occupied.

That didn't stop King's students from continuing to move into the building Wednesday. John McAndrew, a King's spokesman, said the college has not received any order to stop the move-in of 165 students.

Carmon said DEP had a geologist at the site to evaluate the building, He said the drilling will start immediately and results will be available sometime next week.

"We met with the developer – Dave Yeager of the Radnor Property Group – and he told us that they will be installing a specialized venting system for the entire building," Carmon said. "It will operate like a home radon system, but much bigger."

Yeager said the other issue raised by DEP – separation of sewer lines – has already begun and will be completed next week. Sewage had been backing up into neighboring homes on Meyers Court. Yeager said students already in the building are able to use the bathroom facilities without causing any problems.

"We've cooperated with DEP right along," Yeager said. "We have submitted everything they've asked of us. I want to say again that the indoor air quality is fine, according to our test results. We will continue to work with DEP until all of their concerns are satisfied."

Carmon said DEP is "not at a point" to take further action against the developer.

"If the samples indicate problems exist, then we will decide what further action needs to be taken," Carmon said.

DEP has been concerned about the sewer backups and vapor intrusion for months. The vapors could come from the soil beneath the building, which is built on the site of the former Mary MacIntosh dry cleaning company. Underground storage tanks that held petroleum products and dry cleaning fluids were removed from the site.

On Wednesday, Carmon provided copies of two letters DEP sent to Pennoni Associates, Inc., the environmental engineering company on the project. In the letters – one dated March 13, and the other dated April 21 – DEP expressed concern about potential groundwater and soil pollution.

“Those letters sent months ago list documented soil contamination around the building,” Carmon said. “That’s why we asked that testing be done months ago.”

Until DEP gets its test results, Carmon said the recommendation to not allow occupancy stands, although that alone cannot prevent students from moving in.

Find this article at:

http://www.timesleader.com/news/DEP_wants_more_tests_at_dorm_08-27-2009.html

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PA

Tests could define pollution potential

By: **RICH PIETRAS** (Wed, Nov/19/2008)

The EPA will be conducting tests near the Raymark Superfund site in Hatboro to determine if residents could be at risk from pollutants, in the form of vapors, seeping into their basements.

While the 7-acre site on Jacksonville Road was identified as a source of TCE contamination of groundwater in 1979, the Environmental Protection Agency now makes checking for such "vapor intrusion" part of its routine five-year review. Trichloroethylene, or TCE, is a metal cleaner and in high levels may cause liver, kidney or lung cancer if inhaled or ingested.

But until more tests are done, the risk to residents, particularly those to the west and southwest of the site, is unknown.

In the meantime, EPA will perform testing on monitoring wells west of the railroad tracks. If the test results indicate a potential health risk, the EPA will contact residents to ask permission to perform air testing in their homes. This testing will be conducted at no cost to the property owner.

Sharon Fang, the EPA's remedial project manager, presented a report to borough council at a meeting earlier this month that was attended by about a dozen residents. Fang said that although Raymark's past problems with soil and drinking water had been addressed, these new "potential risks" are unknown, as were how many homes could be affected.

If the EPA determines that vapor intrusion is a problem, in most cases it can be easily fixed by installing a system similar to one used in homes that have radon problems.

The system takes vapors that may be underneath the foundation and vents them outdoors. The systems would be placed in the homes at no cost to the property owner.

Over the next six months, the EPA will be testing wells downhill of the site. And depending on the findings, tests may be conducted in homes by the end of 2009. The EPA has been in contact with the borough about the testing, and once the plans are finalized, a fact sheet will be distributed to the community. Later, if a threat is found, residents would be contacted directly.

Vapor intrusion is the process by which chemicals can evaporate, releasing vapors that can enter buildings through cracks, crawl spaces, or any other openings in a building's foundation.

Fang said that recently the EPA has begun evaluating vapor intrusion at sites that are contaminated with volatile organic compounds, such as TCE, as part of the standard review process. In most cases, the risk of vapor intrusion is low.

Borough solicitor Adrian Meyer, who was borough council president in the early 1980s when the Raymark site was identified as the source of contamination, said that although the report is some reason for concern, he stressed that no pollutants had been found yet. Meyer also lived on Moreland Avenue, near the site, from 1974 to 1984.

"I don't know how many people, if any, this may affect because nothing has been found," Meyer said. "Only a potential problem has been identified."

John Zygmunt, council president, described the site as an ongoing ordeal for the borough, but was hopeful to be able to have progress reports as soon as possible from the state Department of Environmental Protection and the EPA.

The Raymark site has been used as a metal fabrication shop from 1948 to the present. From 1948 to 1972, treated wastes and untreated wastewater from electroplating and degreasing operations were disposed of in four unlined lagoons on site. During the same period, TCE was stored in outdoor, above-ground tanks. Area-wide groundwater contamination was discovered in 1979 when TCE was detected in eight Hatboro Water Authority wells near the site.

A copy of the report is available to the public at borough offices and also online at www.epa.gov.

Rich Pietras can be reached at 215-345-3119 or rpietras@phillyburbs.com.

Article's URL:

<http://www.phillyburbs.com/pb-dyn/news/113-11192008-1624163.html>

Posted on Mon, May. 25, 2009

Blue Bell

A Blue Bell gasoline leak remains a problem after 11 years

By Derrick Nunnally

Inquirer Staff Writer

Eleven years after a massive gasoline leak from Blue Bell Gulf tainted groundwater and sent vapors through a swath of Whitpain Township, the problems it caused haven't been solved.

The cleanup bill for the 13,000-gallon leak is \$12.1 million and climbing. Dozens of neighbors of the former station are a decade into a court fight over the pollution that remains years from a tidy ending. The gas station's owner, now unemployed, is trying to get off the hook for the entire cost of the mess.

And on a recent gray day, a rainbow-hued cloud slid along the surface of a pond in this sedate Montgomery County suburb.

"Look at the sheen of gas here," Christine Fisher of Blue Bell said at a pasture where she once fed a horse and goat. "After a rain, we find these little puddles of sheen back in the woods here, still."

State inspectors, too, are still finding remnants of the pollution while checking groundwater with 40-foot-deep test wells. A water-pumping treatment system brought the pollution down to a level considered safe by Pennsylvania standards, but some gasoline additives are likely to linger in Whitpain's groundwater for years.

"We can't really clean up groundwater," said professor Laura Toran, chair of environmental geology at Temple University. "It's a myth. You can protect the soil zone, and you can keep it away from some of the groundwater. But cleaning it up? That's a really tough row to hoe."

Despite the long string of problems it would cause, the largest gasoline spill in recent Southeastern Pennsylvania history eluded authorities' attention for months.

In the spring of 1998, a problem with the underground tanks of Blue Bell Gulf caused gasoline to seep out, but station owner Thomas F. Wagner didn't immediately notice it. The gas drained into the soil and into groundwater beneath the bustling intersection of Skippack Pike and Penllyn Blue Bell Pike for up to two months.

By May 8, 1998, enough gas had spread that pent-up vapors in a well's pump house across the road from the station caused an explosion, causing little damage but drawing the first widespread attention to the problem.

Shortly before the explosion, Wagner had learned he had a leak and contacted the state Department of Environmental Protection, said his attorney, John Mattioni.

"He followed the correct protocol," Mattioni said.

The leak was stopped, and Wagner told the DEP that only a few gallons had spilled.

The magnitude of the problem, however, hadn't yet been discovered.

Seven weeks later, on June 30, dangerously thick gasoline vapors were found in a house a quarter-mile away. Only then did a full DEP investigation reveal the extent of the pollution, with dozens of neighbors reporting problems. The DEP estimates that at least 13,000 gallons spread a half-mile under the heart of Blue Bell that spring.

Much of the cleanup expense so far has come from the \$5.5 million construction of a water-treatment plant in a hulking corrugated-metal building on township land behind Joan Thurman's house in the Village Circle subdivision. Outside her front windows, quiet, winding streets became speckled with dozens of freshly dug test wells.

"We'd wake up in the morning and find a backhoe on the lawn," said Thurman, 77.

The DEP assessed that the plant might have to run 10, 20, perhaps 50 years to undo the damage in the water beneath the residential area.

Five years after a water-treatment system at the gas station site began working, the larger facility's pumps were turned on in 2004 and shut down in 2007, after tests showed the groundwater's pollution was as low as the plant could get it.

"It was nearly as if we were pumping clean water relative to what the system could do," DEP spokesman Dennis Harney said.

The building still stands, ready to be switched back on if the state's quarterly checks of 31 nearby test wells find a rise in contamination. That hasn't happened, but officials also have not yet given the go-ahead to empty the building of its equipment and hand it over to the township, as is eventually planned.

"It might take years," said Phyllis C. Lieberman, township manager.

Two environmental-consulting firms hired in 2005 to manage the spill have cost the state a combined \$620,000 and are still working at it, Harney said.

Toran said water-treatment pumps fail at completely cleaning up 85 percent of the spills where they're used. Groundwater flows into underground crevices that pumps can't easily pull it out of. Once a hardy chemical such as the gasoline additive methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE) flows into it, the contamination can hang around for decades despite efforts to remove it.

State inspectors' January check found MTBE in 17 of the 31 test wells.

The gasoline fouled about a dozen homes' drinking-water wells, including Christine and Warren Fisher's, forcing them to switch to public water permanently.

In the complex court battle that ensued, the Fishers were among 45 neighbors who sued Wagner and his equipment suppliers over the chemicals' danger. (Two other homeowners settled; one declined to comment, and the other could not be reached.) The case was split several ways to sort out legal responsibility and other issues, and only four homeowners have gone to trial.

After a month in court in 2007, they lost, but the matter is up for appeal in a quest to reassemble all 45

A Blue Bell gasoline leak remains a problem after 11 years
plaintiffs for one trial.

"These cases are complicated," said Brendan Collins, one of their attorneys, "but there is no reason why this case could not have been tried prior to 2007."

That the case is still coursing through the legal system has frustrated some plaintiffs.

On a rainy Monday last month, six of them picketed the Norristown courthouse to complain about the delay and the piecemeal trials.

"No jury will get the total picture of this environmental impact unless they hear from all of us," said Christine Fisher, 72.

While their fate - and their neighborhood's health - is still being calculated, the Blue Bell Gulf station has been wiped off the landscape. A bank replaced it, and Wagner, who is in his 60s, is unemployed and on disability.

The DEP contends Wagner is liable for the \$12.1 million in cleanup expenses, plus interest, but that, too, is something the courts have to sort out. Wagner contended in court that his equipment suppliers bore the liability.

"We're sitting here in sort of a limbo state," said Mattioni, Wagner's lawyer.

Contact staff writer Derrick Nunnally at 610-313-8212 or dnunnally@phillynews.com.

Find this article at:

http://www.philly.com/philly/news/local/20090525_A_Blue_Bell_gasoline_leak_Blue_Bell_remains_a_problem_after_11_years.html

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Dorschel Group sues to recover costs of cleaning purchased land

Steve Orr • Staff writer • January 18, 2011

A company affiliated with the Dorschel Automotive Group has sued six parties, including Sunoco Inc. and another local auto dealer, to recover unexpectedly high environmental cleanup costs at a property in Henrietta.

The property, at 3865-75 West Henrietta Road, has been remediated and certified under the state Brownfield Cleanup Program and is now being used by Dorschel for storage and service areas. But the company incurred more than \$700,000 in cleanup and other costs for which it is seeking compensation, according to legal papers.

"This is for cost recovery, to get back at least some of the money that was spent on the cleanup. The cost was more than was contemplated," said Linda Shaw, a Rochester lawyer who represents Dorschel. The suit was filed in state Supreme Court about two weeks ago.

Legal papers name a half-dozen firms that, over the last half-century, operated a service station, a camper sales and service business, a heavy equipment dealership and an auto dealership on two adjoining parcels on West Henrietta Road about a half-mile south of The Marketplace mall.

The property was left contaminated with petroleum products.

The previous owner of the two parcels, Cortese Automotive Group, had conducted environmental assessments of the property and prepared a cleanup plan. R.J. Dorschel Corp. bought the parcels in 2006 and began to carry out that plan, Shaw said. The company also signed up for the state brownfield program, which provides tax credits and liability waivers if contaminated commercial or industrial property is cleaned up.

But Dorschel found that much more work was

needed. Workers discovered six previously undocumented underground storage tanks that had to be removed. Contaminated soil was removed, but a small amount had to be left in place because it was near underground utilities.

That led to a restriction that the property could be used only for commercial purposes, and forced installation of a special ventilation system.

"The good news here is that people walking into the car dealership can feel safe. There are no vapors," Shaw said.

The downside, she said, is that the value of the property was reduced. That, plus hundreds of thousands of dollars spent on remediation, forms the basis of the suit's \$717,000 claim.

John Cortese, president of the firm that bears his family's name, said Cortese has not seen the court papers.

"We're not even aware of the issue. As far as we're concerned, all the environmental were done at the time we closed on" the 2006 property sale, he said.

Cortese Properties LP bought the parcels in 1989 and 1998, court papers say.

A spokesman for Sunoco Inc. did not return a call for comment Monday. Court papers said the Philadelphia-based firm operated a service station on the northern parcel from 1953 to 1981.

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Posted on Fri, Mar. 6, 2009

Specter would fund study of cancer cluster

By Amy Worden

Inquirer Staff Writer

Scientists would receive \$5.5 million to study a first-of-its-kind cancer cluster in Northeastern Pennsylvania under a provision inserted by Sen. Arlen Specter in the federal spending bill moving through Congress.

The cluster is potentially linked to environmental hazards.

Under the \$410 billion federal spending bill moving through Congress, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention would receive \$5 million to study cases of polycythemia vera (PV), a rare blood cancer that turned up in unusually high numbers in an area 80 miles northwest of Philadelphia, said Specter (R., Pa.).

In addition, the Drexel University School of Public Health would receive \$499,000 to conduct a "case control study" to look at individuals with the disease and compare them with the general population.

Specter, in an interview last night, said the disorder, which studies have shown may be linked to Superfund sites and a waste-coal-fired power plant, "threatens an entire community."

"People in that area are very concerned about the problem," said Specter. "They're entitled to the best answers science can give them."

Specter, a cancer survivor and champion of medical research, has spent 21/2 years fighting for federal funding to study PV cases around McAdoo, Schuylkill County, in a coal-mining region near the border of Carbon and Luzerne Counties.

The state Health Department identified at least 38 confirmed cases of PV among people who lived near one of several U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Superfund sites in the McAdoo area, where hundreds of thousands of gallons of toxic waste were illegally dumped in the 1970s.

Stephen Ostroff, director of the state Bureau of Epidemiology, said there could be more cases of PV that were not known because they were not reported or because diagnostics were not as reliable years ago when the cancer started emerging.

"This is a tremendous amount of funding to devote to this particular problem," said Ostroff. "It will greatly advance our ability to get answers in this area."

A study published in the February issue of *Cancer, Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention* found that a large number of people in the McAdoo area who were suffering from cancer "lived in close proximity to environmental hazards."

"The role of the environment in the origin of this blood cancer has not been previously documented," said Ronald Hoffman, one of the study's authors and a professor of medicine at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York. "This study may prove that diagnosis of this cancer based solely on clinical criteria may be inaccurate. The frequency of this form of bone-marrow cancer could be specifically related to the environment."

The funding would build on initial research, support significant epidemiological and environmental studies related to the disease, and improve the reporting of PV cases, Ostroff said.

The McAdoo area represents the first recorded PV cluster in the United States, health officials said, but researchers are looking at other potential clusters in West Virginia.

"We've established the fact that there is more disease than there ought to be," said Ostroff. "Now that we've defined the 'what,' we need to try to answer 'why.' "

The state Department of Health requested a federal survey in 2006 after area residents complained about seemingly high rates of disease.

In one case, two members of the same family fell ill with the disorder, as did several of their neighbors. Betty Kester, who was interviewed for an *Inquirer* story on the PV cases in October 2007, and her husband, Lester, both died in 2008.

Contact staff writer Amy Worden at 717-783-2584 or aworden@phillynews.com.

Find this article at:

http://www.philly.com/inquirer/local/20090306_Specter_would_fund_study_of_cancer_cluster.html

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Environmental Research Associates, Inc.

Research & Consulting Ecologists

Havertown PA Superfund 15 Oct 2009 12:02 pm

Into The Unknown - The Chewing Gum Factory Site At The Eagle Road Corridor

Michael H. Levin, Ph.D., F.A.A.A.S.
www.EnvironmentResearchAssoc.com

1. The site is a portion of the Superfund Site since 1982, National Priority List #542, administered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The remedy status is incomplete. No vapor intrusion studies into closed structures have been performed.
2. The entire gum factory property was taken by Eminent Domain in the Fall of 2009 with compensation of \$1.2Million. An undisclosed amount of additional compensation is being sought by the owner from Haverford Township in Common Pleas Court. Legal fees for acquisition and subsequent lease from Haverford Township to the YMCA have not been disclosed.
3. An early draft lease of the real property is initially for 25 years, then additional terms of 10 and 15 years have been proposed and are in negotiation between Haverford Township and the Philadelphia YMCA; preliminary terms have been disclosed in point form, but not finalized, nor agreed upon between the two parties. The lease has been updated without informing residents of Haverford Township. An early draft of the proposed lease has been summarized, but nuances - more than equally important in a legal agreement - have not. A Release of Liability for environmental factors has not been released; such protections to Haverford Township are not likely to afford complete protections against subsequent Civil Suit for environmental harm by parties.
4. In the event of building abandonment, it would be desirable for Haverford Township to have such a structure erected by lessee removed from the site.
5. The number of potential users of a YMCA to be erected at the site is unknown; large numbers of prospective original users of a private recreational building - proposed as 72,000 square feet by the YMCA at the site — have not come forward to declare their interest in the YMCA project. Proposed yearly fees of nearly \$1,000 per family, may dampen enthusiasm. Additionally, private medical insurance policies now include health club memberships at many local area health clubs as well as others throughout the country at no additional yearly cost.
6. An additional add-on to the initial pump and treat remedy is now being tried near the site, however, no report has been rendered of its efficacy or whether it will or can be applied at the gum factory site in the foreseeable future, defined as ~50+ years. This leaves the question whether the gum factory site can ever be cost effectively remedied as a whole or even in part.
7. Despite the existence of highly qualified scientific personnel in the Delaware Valley area, Haverford has not seen fit to hire any of them to determine suitability of a highly contaminated toxic waste site with wood preserver waste as a site for a public building. No such contaminated toxic waste site has ever been identified by EPA among the ~107 such Superfund Sites contaminated with wood preserver waste throughout the country.
8. The vapor intrusion issue will continue to bedevil any enclosed building with architectural and environmentally necessary construction at the gum factory site, continuous building remediation, fail-safe environmental engineering of remedies, and constant air monitoring and analysis, the costs of which are currently unknown, unpredictable and potentially unbounded. Volatile organic compounds (VOC's) and semi-volatile organic compounds which might enter

building air from below ground as well as from ambient air in the vicinity cause human disease, chromosome damage, alteration of DNA, and cancer in both short and long-term exposures at or below permissible exposure limits (PEL's) or action levels (defined as one-half of a PEL).

9. EPA has completely and admittedly failed to address vapor intrusion from the ground, among other things, even though the Agency has capped such toxic waste to protect public health in other parts of this Superfund Site

10. The administrative handling, remedies, day-to-day operations, of the Havertown Superfund Site, Number 542 (AKA Havertown PCP Site (sic); on the National Priority List have left much to be desired and are less than scientifically competent since inception primarily because the remedy has been driven by a race to the lowest possible cost. In a heavily urbanized area, this is inexcusable.

Comments are closed.

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Schnapf, Lawrence

From: Schnapf, Lawrence
Sent: Wednesday, May 07, 2008 7:57 PM
To: LSchnapf@aol.com
Subject: Families have lived for decades with TCE

By ED KRACZ
The Intelligencer

The neighborhood looks harmless enough, with well-maintained homes and dozens of tall, sturdy trees that have grown up right along with it.

The danger here lies in what cannot be seen. It's about 200 feet underground and has festered there since the time this cluster of homes in Perkasio, along Cedar View Avenue and Evergreen Lane, a cul-de-sac that spills into Cedar View, was constructed in the mid-1970s.

Even if it were above ground, out in the open, the danger would be difficult to recognize. It would look like water, colorless, but with a slightly sweet odor and a sweet, but burning taste. A potentially deadly taste, because drinking it or even breathing it could cause nervous system effects, liver and lung damage, abnormal heartbeat, coma and possibly death.

It is trichloroethylene, or TCE.

It was discovered in the well water used by residents along Cedar View and Evergreen more than five years after the development was completed and the homes sold. For more than 25 years, residents lived with the knowledge that the water beneath them, the water they used everyday, was tainted with TCE. Their fears were allayed somewhat when, after the discovery, a patch was applied in the form of a carbon filtration system that parceled TCE from drinking water.

Now, residents are close to getting a permanent fix with a public water line likely coming to the neighborhood later this year.

"I guess it doesn't surprise me that (public) water is coming out here," said Aaron Landis, who has lived on Cedar View for 27 years. "I always knew somewhere along the line, with the growth that is happening there, that it would happen. I have mixed emotions. I like the idea of having public water in a way, but the other way is, everything has a price tag."

A public water line along Cedar View, which connects Fifth Street and Branch Road, not too far from Pennridge High School, depends on several factors.

But the plan to make it happen picked up momentum recently with a meeting among officials from the Department of Environmental Protection, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Bucks County Redevelopment Authority, the Perkasio Borough Authority, East Rockhill Township and Katz Builders and Developers of Bucks County.

The contaminated wells will have two tests performed on them this month, with the results expected back in June.

The EPA says five parts per billion parts of water is the maximum safe level for drinking water. The most recent test results for the Cedar View neighborhood was in 2002, when 17 parts per billion were revealed. Tests in years previous to 2002 showed the highest concentration of TCE to be 140 parts per billion.

If the wells still show contamination when the results are returned in June — and there is no one associated with the project who believes the results will indicate otherwise — a determination will be made on how much money the DEP and EPA will contribute. The amount, estimated to be around \$200,000, will then be funneled through the Bucks County Redevelopment Authority.

Money will also come from whatever is left in a trust fund set up by Lenape Manufacturing, a defunct metal machining and

fabrication company blamed for the contamination because it used metal cleaners and degreasers that have TCE in them. The fun was set up to help pay for maintenance of the carbon filters and water monitoring.

In the 1990s, tests for TCE on Lenape's property showed 2,000 parts per billion. The property is now owned by Draper DBS, a cabinet and furniture maker.

"We used to see old rusty barrels in the back of (Lenape Manufacturing) all the time," said Diane Seitz, who bought her home on Cedar View Avenue in 1978.

East Rockhill will have to sign off on the amount and the Perkasio Borough Authority then must sign an agreement with East Rockhill to begin the work. Before the actual digging and excavating for a water line can take place, the DEP must accept public comment for 120 days to see if anyone is opposed to the project.

Katz Builders has a stake as well, since it wants to build nine homes on nearby Fifth Street and needs a public water line to make it happen.

"It looks like there's a light at end of tunnel," said East Rockhill Supervisor Dave Nyman.

But with so many cooks stirring this broth, Landis is skeptical anything will get done.

"We might get it next year, or when you're my age," the 71-year-old Landis said.

Perkasie Borough Authority is hoping to have the project under way by early October with a time frame for completion about 90 days after it begins.

"We've been working on this for five years now," said authority manager Gary Winton, who estimated that about 52 homes would be connected to the new public water line. "This is one thing we can do as a government entity that will really help somebody, and I actually really think this will happen."

It was the early 1980s when the contamination was discovered innocently enough by a resident who had never used well water before and decided to test exactly what it was he was drinking. The test results revealed TCE.

After the TCE discovery, bottled water companies began doing a booming business in the neighborhood.

"They told us we shouldn't even shower in (the well water), but what can you do?" said Seitz.

"We had some concern on what effect it would have on us through showers and that type of thing, but we love the development," said Landis.

Many, like Joseph Leo, an original Cedar View homeowner, purchased his house in 1976, still don't drink the water, even though he has had his carbon filter replaced twice already.

Leo's not sure of the effects the TCE has had, but there have been health problems in his family, including cancer and diabetes.

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