



Community Update

Zonolite Co. / W.R. Grace Site

Hamilton Township, New Jersey

June 2006

RESULTS

Of the 22 residences and 22 municipal properties sampled, none had asbestos at a level high enough to require a cleanup.

All of the 210 samples were below 0.10%, the level at which the analytical instrument used can reliably detect asbestos.

In an ongoing effort to assess the asbestos content in soil near the former W.R. Grace plant on Industrial Drive in Hamilton Township in Mercer County, EPA completed its analysis of soil samples taken from April 3rd to April 14th in Hamilton, Lawrence and Ewing Townships and the City of Trenton. A total of 210 soil samples were collected from 22 public recreation areas and 22 residential properties. All sampling activities were coordinated with local government officials.

Sampled Areas

Hamilton Township - 16 residential lots, 12 parks
Lawrence Township - 6 residential lots, 6 parks
Ewing Township - 2 parks
City of Trenton - 2 parks

FUTURE ACTIONS

Based upon the favorable sampling results, EPA has determined that no additional sampling off-site is warranted.

On-site monitoring of ground water levels will continue. Additional cleanup on the former plant site is tentatively scheduled for late summer 2006.

The soil samples were analyzed to determine whether asbestos had been carried by the wind from the former vermiculite processing plant and deposited on the soil in nearby areas.

An EPA representative will contact all residential homeowners to discuss the meaning of the sampling results. In addition, EPA will meet with local government officials to discuss the results of samples from public recreation areas and proposed future actions.

Background

EPA is investigating the former Zonolite/W.R. Grace facility in Hamilton and adjacent parcels as part of a larger, nationwide investigation addressing potential asbestos contamination at vermiculite processing and handling facilities that received vermiculite ores from the W.R. Grace mine in Libby, Montana.

For more than 40 years, W.R. Grace processed vermiculite ore from Montana at the Hamilton plant site. Ores from that mine contained varying amounts of asbestos. It was then sold commercially for fireproofing, insulation and garden products.

Vermiculite from the Libby mine was contaminated with naturally occurring amphibole asbestos including tremolite, a potent spear-like form of asbestos. Other forms of asbestos were also used in the operations. Asbestos, if inhaled, can cause lung disease, including asbestosis and mesothelioma, a form of lung cancer associated with asbestos.

EPA completed the first phase of cleanup at the former W.R. Grace plant in April 2004. Approximately 9,200 tons of soil contaminated with asbestos were removed and shipped to a secure landfill in Pennsylvania. The excavated areas were filled in with clean soil. Additional removal of contaminated soil from a wetland area adjacent to the plant site is planned for 2006, as soon as favorable conditions allow.

Questions?

On-Scene Coordinators

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Visit EPA's Web site at:
www.epa.gov/region2/superfund/removal/hamilton

EPA Regional Public Liaison

EPA Region 2 has designated a public liaison as a point-of-contact for community concerns and questions about the federal Superfund program in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. To support this effort, the Agency has established a 24-hour, toll-free number that the public can call to request information, express concerns, or register complaints about Superfund. The public liaison for EPA's Region 2 office is:

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