



**Technical Assistance Services for Communities**  
**Contract No.: EP-W-07-059**  
**TASC WA No.: TASC-4-HQ-OSRTI**  
**Technical Directive No.: 2.09 TD#8 Pacific Coast Pipeline**

**TASC Technical Assistance Needs Assessment**

**Site Name:** Pacific Coast Pipeline  
**Site Location:** Fillmore, California  
**Date:** May 28, 2012

**Introduction**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Technical Assistance Services for Communities Program (TASC) is conducting this Technical Assistance Needs Assessment for the citizens group, One Step A La Vez, and the larger Fillmore, California community. The purpose of this assessment is to better understand the technical assistance needs of the community related to the Pacific Coast Pipeline Superfund site and provide recommendations for meeting those needs.

The recommendations contained in this summary are based on:

- Background information on the site and community gathered online.<sup>1</sup>
- Observations made and conversations held during a site tour on February 23, 2012, with 16 community members in attendance.<sup>2</sup>
- Attendance at a One Step A La Vez community meeting on February 23, 2012, and discussions with meeting attendees:
  - One Step A La Vez Staff
    - Lynn Edmonds (Chief Executive Officer)
    - Cindy Escoto (Coordinator)
    - Daniel Gonzales (Youth Advocate)
    - Leroy Latshaw (Youth Mentor)
  - Community Members
    - Susan Banks
    - Celene Cruz
    - Andrea Hernandez
    - Allen King
    - Diana Marin

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<sup>1</sup> Information sources are listed at the end of this document.

<sup>2</sup> The majority of the site tour attendees also attended the One Step A La Vez community meeting that followed. Fillmore Mayor Gayle Washburn attended the site tour.

- Beatriz Tovar
- Estefany Tovar
- Kathy Vargas
- One Step A La Vez Technical Advisors
  - Dr. James Dahlgren
  - Maria Dominguez
  - Trevor Peckham
- A phone interview with EPA Community Involvement Coordinator Jackie Lane and EPA Remedial Project Manager Holly Hadlock on March 1, 2012.

### **Site Background Information**

The 56-acre Pacific Coast Pipeline Superfund site is a former Texaco oil refinery in Fillmore, California. The refinery operated from 1920 until the early 1950s. Major products of the refining included gasoline, diesel and fuel oil. Site operators placed wastes from the refining operations, which included tank bottoms, filter clays and sludges, into unlined waste pits on the site during this time. After 1950, Texaco converted the refinery into a crude oil pumping station that operated until 2000. After Texaco merged with Chevron in 2001, Chevron became the official site owner.

In the early 1980s, under the direction of state agencies, Texaco performed an environmental assessment of the site and found soil and ground water contaminated with heavy metals and volatile organic compounds. In 1986, Texaco removed several thousand pounds of soil from the waste pits and installed a number of ground water monitoring wells. In 1989, EPA added the site to the Superfund National Priorities List due to two plumes of ground water contamination, one just under the main waste pit and the other in the southwest area of the site. Under the 1992 Record of Decision, cleanup of the ground water began in 1993. Ground water was pumped out of the contaminated plume, treated to remove contaminants, and the clean water was discharged into Pole Creek. A soil vapor extraction system also removed contaminants from the soil in two hot spots. In 2002, both the ground water treatment and soil vapor extraction systems were shut off because they had reached their limit of effectiveness.

Despite the technologies reaching their cleanup capacity, ground water contaminant concentrations were still higher than California state standards and a risk assessment showed soil contamination poses a risk to on-site workers should the site be reused in the future. Therefore, in June 2011, EPA issued a Proposed Plan for cleaning up this remaining contamination. For the northern ground water plume, EPA proposed natural attenuation and continued ground water monitoring. For the southern ground water plume, EPA proposed a combination of natural attenuation along with two technologies, air sparging and enhanced bioremediation, to reduce contaminant concentrations. For the soil, EPA proposed soil excavation with disposal in an on-site, capped pit and land use restrictions. These remediation techniques were officially selected in September 2011 when EPA issued a Record of Decision (ROD) Amendment for the site. EPA also completed a site-wide Five-Year Review in September 2011, which found current conditions protective of human health and the environment. The Five-Year Review found there

was no exposure to contaminated ground water and limited exposure to contaminated soil because access to the site property was restricted.

Currently, there are no structures on the site and little vegetation. Proposed future reuses for the site include a combination of light industrial, commercial and recreational uses.

### **History of Community Involvement**

EPA followed its community involvement process for Superfund sites, beginning with a Community Relations Plan issued soon after EPA listed the site on the National Priorities List in 1989.

EPA developed the plan after interviewing community members and city officials and staff. The plan identified three major areas of community concern:

1. Health effects.
2. Drinking water supply effects.
3. Property value effects.

The plan recommended three major ways for EPA to interact with the community:

1. Provide information about site studies and findings at the site by issuing fact sheets and media releases; communicating with local residents and the adjacent San Cayetano Elementary School about on-site activities as they occurred; establishing document repositories at the public library and city hall; and making sure all documents were translated into Spanish.
2. Engage in two-way communication with the public on site-related issues and proposed site activities by hosting public meetings, especially when EPA issued major site documents, and by making sure citizens had an opportunity comment on major site documents.
3. Monitor public concerns and information needs so that EPA could update its community involvement approach as necessary.

After EPA issued the Community Relations Plan, EPA distributed a series of fact sheets and met with community members at key milestones in the cleanup process until the Agency issued the first Proposed Plan (for the ground water pump-and-treat system and soil vapor extraction) in 1992. After that, there were no major community outreach activities until 2004, when Chevron began to engage with community members through a series of flyers about upcoming field activities. In 2006, EPA and Chevron both engaged with the community during a Five-Year Review of the site's remedy.

In late 2010, EPA issued a fact sheet announcing the upcoming release of the proposed cleanup plan for the residual contamination in ground water and soil. With heightened community interest, EPA updated its Community Relations Plan. It once again performed community interviews to gain a better understanding of site-related community needs and issued a

Community Involvement Plan in May 2011. Community concerns identified by the plan included:

1. A dissatisfaction with EPA's past efforts to keep the community informed and involved regarding site activities.
2. Environmental concerns: blowing dust, a chemical smell coming from the site and flood control issues.
3. Human health concerns: primarily focused on children from potential contamination in dust as well as cancer cases during the facility's operations.
4. Communications and public education concerns: people felt they were not kept adequately informed about the cleanup process and wanted more information on technical issues such as soil contamination and exposure risks.
5. Other concerns included the site's impacts on businesses, property values and site reuse.

The Community Involvement Plan reiterated the means by which EPA intended to interact with the community, including via fact sheets, handouts and flyers (with a mailing list and Spanish translation), through community meetings, through an EPA-hosted website and a local information repository where documents would be posted, and through community comments on site documents.

After EPA issued the Community Involvement Plan, both EPA and Chevron increased their community engagement activities in response to community interest. Activities included two public meetings (one in June 2011 on the Proposed Plan and one in November 2011 on the results of the site's human health and ecological risk assessments), fact sheets on upcoming field activities, and a website hosted by Chevron with publicly accessible information about the site ([www.fillmoreworks.com](http://www.fillmoreworks.com)). Also during this time, One Step A La Vez began organizing independent community involvement activities at the site, focusing in particular on youth involvement. Both EPA and Chevron met with One Step A La Vez members on a few occasions 2011 to discuss upcoming site activities and answer questions. Chevron also met with local officials about the site after the November 2011 public meeting.

### **EPA Community Involvement**

EPA conducted a 30-day comment period and public meeting to solicit verbal and written comments on the June 2011 Proposed Plan to address soil and the remaining ground water plume contamination. A responsiveness summary to public comment was included with the September 2011 ROD Amendment.

EPA and Chevron hosted a site tour for One Step A La Vez members on February 23, 2012, and have scheduled additional site tours in April/May 2012 for interested community members. Chevron continues to maintain its community outreach website.

EPA requested that TASC perform this Technical Assistance Needs Assessment, focusing on One Step A La Vez, because of the organization's recent interest in the site.

## **Independent Community Activities**

One Step A La Vez's Superfund Toxics Committee currently meets weekly to discuss the site. One Step A La Vez became interested in the site when the organization heard rumors about local cancers cases related to the site. Members are under the impression that the larger Fillmore community does not know much about the site. In the last few months, One Step A La Vez has been producing outreach videos and publishing them on their video channel at YouTube ([www.youtube.com/myonestepvideo](http://www.youtube.com/myonestepvideo)). The videos feature One Step A La Vez youth members introducing the site and discussing their concerns.

In addition, One Step A La Vez reported to TASC that the Superfund Toxics Committee has been working with a toxicologist from Santa Monica, California, to design a health survey for local residents. The committee indicated that it plans to go door-to-door to current and former near-site residents and ask them to complete the survey. The committee also indicated that the toxicologist's team will then analyze the health survey data to identify perceived patterns and their potential connections to the site.

## **Perspectives on Community Technical Assistance Needs**

Observations made during the February 2012 site tour and discussions with One Step A La Vez members revealed that people are skeptical of the enhanced community outreach by EPA and, in particular, Chevron. They are unsatisfied with answers they have received regarding the site's contamination and would like to see data and other technical information that would enable them to draw their own conclusions.

One Step A La Vez members identified several specific technical topic areas of interest: past health studies, soil cleanup history, historical and current ground water data, soil vapor intrusion, and current air monitoring data. Across these areas of interest, One Step A La Vez members stated that they would like independent assistance in understanding site contamination and the conclusions reached by the Agency.

## **Recommendations for Technical Assistance**

### *Recommended Technical Assistance Activities*

One Step A La Vez would benefit from a discussion series focusing on their topic areas of interest. These could be scheduled every two to three months to make sure each topic area is explored fully and well understood by community members. One Step A La Vez could host each discussion, with attendance open to the entire Fillmore community. Each discussion would be led by a technical assistance provider with the ability to communicate technical information to the public who would consistently work with the community across all topic areas of interest. Each discussion would begin with a short presentation by the technical assistance provider with a summary of the background information related to each the topic area, analysis performed and results. Following each presentation, interested community members could engage in a detailed discussion with the provider, and the provider could directly share key findings regarding specific questions. A round table discussion of this sort combined with direct sharing of data

would enhance community members' understanding and enable them to develop informed opinions about their areas of concern. Community-friendly visual materials (e.g., maps, figures and timelines) could also enhance understanding during the discussions.

Five recommended topics areas to start the discussion series include:

1. Overview of Past Health Assessments: This discussion would provide an overview of health assessments performed at the site to date (i.e., public health assessment and human health risk assessments), including the data collected, populations addressed and results. Risks under the future land use scenario would be discussed.
2. History of Soil Cleanup Activities: This discussion would provide an overview for all soil cleanup activities performed to date, including the sampling data (particularly air) collected during cleanup, residual concentrations of contaminants, and disposal areas for contaminated soil.
3. Ground Water Monitoring Data: This discussion would provide an overview of ground water data collection and analysis, contaminant concentration modeling and trends in site data over time.
4. Soil Vapor Intrusion: This discussion would provide an overview of soil vapor intrusion, the potential for it to be an issue at the site, and any vapor intrusion data or modeling performed at the site to date.
5. Current Air Monitoring Data: This discussion would provide an overview of local wind patterns and current air sampling activities at the site, including data analysis.

There were a few other community areas of interest identified as potential discussion topics. It is likely that more will be expressed in the future. Accordingly, it would work well if the discussions could continue until residents feel satisfied that all of their questions about the site and site activities have been adequately addressed.

#### *Means for Obtaining the Technical Assistance*

EPA's TASC program is well suited to providing the kind of assistance described above and EPA has determined that One Step A La Vez is eligible to request TASC services. TASC funds are available to communities dealing with environmental problems based on need. Communities can make assistance requests by contacting EPA's Community Involvement Coordinator. TASC provides independent non-advocacy technical assistance directly to communities through a federal contract. The contractor evaluates the technical assistance needs of the community and chooses an appropriate technical assistance provider to provide the services.

## Sources Consulted for Background Information on the Site and the Community

EPA Regional Site Overview for Pacific Coast Pipeline Site. Available at:  
<http://yosemite.epa.gov/r9/sfund/r9sfdocw.nsf/ViewByEPAID/CAD980636781>

Technical documents accessed from this website include:

1. 10/01/89 Community Relations Plan (1989 Original)
2. 05/01/11 Pacific Coast Pipeline Site – Community Involvement Plan
3. 05/31/11 Pacific Coast Pipeline Superfund Site Proposed Plan
4. 09/01/11 Record of Decision Amendment
5. 01/12/10 Reuse Assessment
6. 09/20/11 Third Five-Year Review Report

One Step A La Vez website. Available at: [www.myonestep.org](http://www.myonestep.org).

City of Fillmore website. Available at: [www.fillmoreca.com](http://www.fillmoreca.com).

Fillmore, California Wikipedia website. Available at:  
[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fillmore, California](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fillmore,_California).

Fillmore Works website. Available at: [www.fillmoreworks.com](http://www.fillmoreworks.com).

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