

Parker Street Waste Site

Community Update

Introduction

The **Parker Street Waste Site** (PSWS) includes more than 114 acres in New Bedford, Massachusetts. State and federal agencies are investigating contamination at PSWS to determine its boundaries. PSWS generally includes the area bounded by Durfee Street to the north; Liberty Street and the Oak Grove Cemetery to the east; Hillman Street to the south; and Summit Street to the west. Within the site are New Bedford High School, Keith Middle School, Walsh and Andre McCoy athletic fields, residential properties, commercial properties and apartment complexes. The **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency** (EPA) and **Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection** (MassDEP) recently completed Phase I sampling in June 2010 and Phase II sampling in the fall of 2010 to further define these boundaries.

This second issue of the *Community Update* is designed to provide you with comprehensive and up-to-date information on the PSWS in one place. These *Updates* will be issued on a periodic basis – or around important milestones – and we welcome your reactions and comments. These *Updates* are produced through EPA's Technical Assistance Services for Communities (TASC) program, which uses independent contractors to assist communities in understanding technical information about nearby hazardous waste sites. EPA is working in cooperation with **MassDEP, U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry** (ATSDR) and the **Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Environmental Health** (MDPH/BEH).

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SAMPLING LEADS TO CLEANUP AT FIVE PROPERTIES

EPA and MassDEP conducted Phase I soil sampling in spring 2010. Sampling results for five properties showed the presence of elevated levels of contaminants in surface soils, and EPA began removing soil from these five properties in early November 2010 and completed the work in January 2011.

Background

In the fall of 2010, EPA, MassDEP, and a representative from ATSDR and/or MDPH/BEH discussed the Phase I sampling data with individual property owners and presented each owner with a *Guide to the Soil Sampling Results*. The agencies also hosted availability sessions for residents of local housing complexes. The Phase I sampling results and a summary of the removal actions EPA performed were presented in a community-wide Public Meeting on February 10, 2011.

Dealing with Contaminants

Based upon the initial risk evaluations performed by MassDEP, EPA and MassDEP prioritized the properties that needed to be addressed and responded to the contamination found at the five homes. The response is conducted to conform with the National Contingency Plan (NCP) and also complies with the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (MCP). The MCP requires elimination or control of hazards when contaminants of concern are found within the soils near the surface. There are several potential options to achieve this goal, which may include removing the targeted soil in the area of concern and replacing it with clean soil or establishing a barrier to the contamination by constructing an acceptable cap through the use of clean soil or an impervious surface. The regulations also prohibit any activities that can disrupt soils on properties where there is contamination until it has been adequately addressed.



Site samples being collected and processed for analysis.

SAMPLING AND THE LONG-RANGE PLAN

The primary goals of the current EPA and MassDEP investigations are to: (1) confirm the perimeter of the PSWS (the areas or footprint where there is known to be contamination) and (2) develop a plan to address contamination and ensure that levels of contaminants that may impact health are reduced or eliminated. Phase 1 sampling results – collected in spring 2010 – improved understanding of the site but suggested the need for more sampling.

EPA and MassDEP collected the second round of soil samples, Phase II, beginning in mid-September 2010. Phase II sampling focused on properties along the southern and southeastern perimeters of PSWS. It was completed in October 2010.

Phase II results will be shared with individual property owners this Spring. Once those individual results have been shared, EPA and MassDEP will hold a community meeting to present a summary of the results to the public. Based on the results of Phase II sampling, the agencies will determine whether there is a need for sampling on more properties to identify the final footprint of the contamination.



Soil was removed at five properties where contamination was discovered in Phase 1 sampling.

EPA completed soil removal actions on the five properties from December 2010 to January 2011. Some excavated soil was disposed of at the Turnkey Landfill in Rochester, New Hampshire, a qualified and approved facility. Additional excavated soil has been temporarily stockpiled off site at the Department of Public Infrastructure property on Shawmut Avenue. To prevent any cross-contamination at the stockpiling location, EPA paved the area; placed a plastic liner on top of the pavement; bermed the entire area; and contained the area with hay bales and a silt fence to control run-off. In addition, EPA installed temporary fencing to provide security and requires that all soils be covered with a tarp in off-hours.

Clean fill was brought in for the excavated properties in an effort to return the properties to their original grade. This clean fill was stockpiled on Liberty Street. A fence on the north side of the street secures and contains this clean fill.

During excavation at one of the properties on Hunter Street, metal objects were uncovered, which included a crushed 35-gallon drum, auto parts and scrap metals. A survey of this area was conducted in mid-January to help determine if there are any remaining metal items.

Next Steps

Final work on the five properties where soil excavation already took place will be completed in the spring of 2011. Shrubbery will be replaced and property aesthetics will be returned to the same conditions as they were before EPA entered the property, wherever possible. In addition, EPA will continue to work with MassDEP on evaluating the remaining properties with contaminated soils to determine whether response actions are warranted. If so, EPA and MassDEP will meet with the affected property owners to go over the scope of cleanup activities needed to address the contamination. As with other residential property meetings, EPA and MassDEP will reach out to ATSDR and MDPH for assistance in communicating any health risks associated with environmental contamination. Community members had the opportunity to learn more about the activities performed by EPA and the Phase I soil sampling results by participating in the Public Meeting on February 10, 2011. In the meantime, EPA provides periodic email updates on PSWS activities. See the box on page 5 to sign up for the updates.

INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

The TASC program provides independent technical support for communities to improve their understanding of hazardous waste issues and help communities participate effectively in the assessment and cleanup process. EPA has funded three separate TASC projects to assist New Bedford citizens, including: helping establish an educational network related to environmental justice issues; providing independent technical advisors; and producing this series of *Community Update* documents.

Environmental Justice Educational Network: EPA's

TASC program provided assistance to establish an educational network or forum related to environmental justice issues that encompass the entire New Bedford community. Several successful health education workshops were offered through this project. TASC support for this project was available for a limited time and recently concluded in Fall 2010. EPA hopes that community efforts to date and lessons learned will serve as a foundation for future coalition building. EPA will continue to actively support any community generated effort to establish an EJ network.

Advisor: The second TASC project provides technical assistance for the local group, Citizens Leading Environmental Action Network Inc. (CLEAN) and other community members. This project provides technical assistance to help the public understand reports and analyze sampling data. An independent technical advisor has made several trips to New Bedford to provide presentations and support the community regarding technical matters.

Community Updates: The third TASC project is producing this series of *Community Updates*. TASC contractors prepare these informational *Updates* to assist the New Bedford community in understanding technical data and reports about the PSWS. EPA is working in cooperation with MassDEP, ATSDR and the MDPH/BEH to develop the materials for the *Updates*.



Excavated, contaminated soil was taken off site for safe disposal.

CONTACT US

This *Update* is the second in a series. Please let us know what you think of this issue and send questions or topics you would like us to address in future editions to:

ParkerStreetUpdate@gmail.com or call Nancy Farrell at (617) 357-5772 x 11.

If you have questions regarding environmental contamination or site cleanup, please contact:

Kelsey O'Neil, U.S. EPA New England, Community Involvement Coordinator (617) 918-1799 or Oneil.Kelsey@epa.gov

EPA's Parker Street Neighborhood Community Meetings Calendar can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/region1/mccoyfield/calendar.html>

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If you have questions regarding health or health studies, please contact:

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PUBLIC OUTREACH

EPA, MassDEP, MDPH/BEH, ATSDR and other agencies have met with community organizations and the public on many occasions during 2010 and 2011. Both individual and community meetings will be scheduled in the months to come. These sessions will provide residents and the interested public with results from the sampling analyses and health studies now underway. They will also identify the next steps and emerging issues and respond to questions.

2011

FEBRUARY 2011

- EPA/MassDEP conducted a community-wide Public Meeting on Phase I soil sampling results, and planned response on February 10, 2011.

EARLY SPRING 2011

- EPA/MassDEP plan to report results of Phase II soil sampling to property owners and tenants.
- The agencies plan to meet with owners/tenants on Phase II soil sampling results, then inform interested members of the community.
- ATSDR plans to present findings and results from its health consultation document on Walsh Field.

LATE SPRING 2011

- MDPH/BEH plans to conduct two public meetings: an afternoon session on indoor air and serum PCB data and cancer incidence with regard to school personnel and an evening presentation on cancer and serum PCB testing data in the PSWS neighborhood.

SPRING/SUMMER 2011

- Complete landscaping and site restoration on the five Phase I properties where removal actions were performed last winter. This will involve landscaping work to ensure trees, shrubbery and aesthetics of the property are returned as close as possible to original state.
- Conduct any removal activities required by results of the Phase I and Phase II sampling.

Note: Community meetings will be announced via email, releases to the media and on EPA's website. The schedule above presents goals for these events based on current information. If you would like to receive email updates about the PSWS, please visit EPA's website at www.epa.gov/region1/parkerstreet/index.html

EPA SETS UP NEW BEDFORD PROJECTS WEBSITE

EPA has launched a new website about its cleanup projects in New Bedford, Massachusetts, including the PSWS. EPA's website provides regular updates on the work being performed by EPA at the PSWS. It includes background information, dates of public meetings, how to reach community coordinators and how to sign up for the PSWS mailing list. Copies of *Community Updates* are available on the website in English, Spanish and Portuguese. The website also includes links to information about the work being performed by EPA at the New Bedford Harbor Superfund Site.

The website is: www.epa.gov/nbh/educationalresources.html

The PSWS page can be found at: www.epa.gov/region1/parkerstreet/



To ask questions or make suggestions about the site, contact EPA Community Involvement Coordinator Kelsey O’Neil (Oneil.kelsey@epa.gov, (617) 918-1799, or Toll Free (888) 372-7341 ext. 8-1799).

