

# COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN

## VERMICULITE PRODUCTS Houston, Texas

February 2017



**U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 6**

THE U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY'S (EPA)  
SUPERFUND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM IS COMMITTED  
TO PROMOTING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN CITIZENS AND THE AGENCY.

ACTIVE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IS CRUCIAL TO THE SUCCESS OF ANY PUBLIC PROJECT.

EPA'S COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES FOR A REMOVAL PROJECT AT THE

VERMICULITE PRODUCTS  
HOUSTON, TEXAS

ARE DESIGNED TO

INFORM THE PUBLIC OF THE NATURE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE SITE,

INVOLVE THE PUBLIC IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS THAT WILL AFFECT THEM,

INVOLVE THE PUBLIC IN THE RESPONSES UNDER CONSIDERATION TO REMEDY THESE ISSUES, AND

INFORM THE PUBLIC OF THE PROGRESS BEING MADE TO IMPLEMENT THE REMEDY.

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## **Section 1.0 Overview of the Community Involvement Plan**

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed this Community Involvement Plan to facilitate two-way communication between the communities in and surrounding the Vermiculite Products Site and EPA and to encourage community involvement in site activities. EPA will utilize the community involvement activities outlined in this plan to ensure that residents are continuously informed and provided opportunities to be involved.

This Community Involvement Plan addresses the Vermiculite Products Site's relationship to the community and EPA (Section 2.0), provides a background of the communities (Section 3.0), presents EPA's community involvement program (Section 4.0), and provides a listing of resources available (Appendices). EPA drew upon several information sources to develop this plan, including community interviews and site files. EPA's Regional Office will oversee the implementation of the community involvement activities outlined in this Plan.

## **Section 2.0 Capsule Site Description**

### **2.1 Site History**

The Vermiculite Products Inc. facility is an active vermiculite exfoliation facility that processes vermiculite for use in concrete aggregate. The facility has been in operation since 1941. According to W.R. Grace shipping invoices, 213,750 tons of vermiculite ore from the Zonolite Mine were shipped to this facility between January 1967 and November 1986.

### **2.2 Site Description/Location**

The Vermiculite Products facility is located at 3025 Maxroy Street in Houston, Harris County, Texas, and as mentioned above is an active vermiculite exfoliation facility. The Cityside Homes property is located at 3028 Maxroy Street and forms the western boundary of the Site facility. The Site is bounded to the east by industrial properties, to the south by an active railroad line, and to the north by an undeveloped property. The area directly surrounding this Site is mostly industrial. There is an existing residential area further west of the Site consisting of approximately six older houses. This area and several formerly commercial properties are currently being redeveloped with higher-end residential homes.

### **2.3 Site Inspections/Assessments**

In 2000, as part of an earlier vermiculite assessment, EPA conducted an onsite inspection of the facility. EPA did not collect soil samples during that visit. In interviews with the plant personnel during the 2000 visit, EA was told that the W.R. Grace shipping invoices that indicted Libby ore had been shipped to the site from 1967 through 1986 were inaccurate. In addition, no vermiculite piles were observed during the site visit. At that time EPA determined that no further action was need at this site.

At the initiation of the GAO recommended re-assessment EPA visited the site in order to prioritize sites for evaluation. EPA visited the site in 2009 at the time active redevelopment was not occurring near the site. EPA prioritized the site among the high priority sites for re-assessment based on the amount of Libby vermiculite received at the facility, observed vermiculite at the site, and the number of potential receptors identified within the vicinity of the site.

During a December 16, 2013 site visit, EPA noted that the area around the facility is undergoing rapid residential redevelopment. Redevelopment of properties adjacent to the facility would of necessity engender soil disturbing activities which might expose workers and the general public to aerosolized asbestos fibers. Because of this concern EPA decided to re-focus assessment on off-site properties first. Later that week while the EPA technical assistance contractor was in the community, scoping the area for potential off-site sampling locations, it was observed that soil disturbing activities had commenced on the property immediately adjacent to and west of the facility. EPA immediately began efforts to contact the property owner. The property is owned by Cityside Homes. The property owner was informed of the potential contamination on the property and the dangers of soil disturbing activities and agreed to EPA access for sampling and also indicated that Cityside Homes would cease soil disturbing activities.

## **SECION 3.0 COMMUNITY BACKGROUND**

### **3.1 Community Profile**

Houston is the fourth largest city in the United States and the largest city in the state of Texas. As of the 2008 census, the city had a population of 2.2 million. Houston is the county seat of Harris County and the economic center of the Houston – Sugar Land – Baytown metropolitan area, the sixth largest metropolitan area in the United States with a population of over 5.7 million.

Houston was founded in August 1836 and was incorporated on June 5, 1837. The town was named after then-President of the Republic of Texas - Sam Houston. This port town, and the railroad industry, combined with oil discovery in 1901, has caused surges in the

city's population.

Houston's economy has a broad industrial base in the energy, manufacturing, aeronautics, transportation, and health care sectors and is a leading center for building oilfield equipment. The Port of Houston ranks first in the United States in international waterborne tonnage handled and second in total cargo tonnage handled. The city has a population from various ethnic backgrounds and a large and growing international community. The ethnic breakdown is Hispanic – 37.4%; White Non-Hispanic – 30.8%; Black – 25.3%; Other race – 16.5%; Two or more races – 3.1%; Vietnamese – 1.7%; Chinese – 1.2%; Asian Indian – 1.0%; American Indian – 0.8%; Other Asian – 0.6%.

### **3.2 History of Community Involvement**

January, 2014	A Community Involvement Coordinator (CIC) was designated.
January, 2014	A Community Involvement Plan was written.
January, 2014	A Fact Sheet was prepared for distribution.
January, 2014	Elected officials and local municipalities were notified.
February, 2014	The On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) and the CIC visited the area, talked to the neighboring community members and local officials, and distributed Fact Sheets.

### **3.3 Key Community Concerns**

Current Site conditions meet the factors which indicate that the Site is a threat to the public health, welfare, and the environment, and that a removal is appropriate. Actual or threatened releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants from this Site, if not addressed by implementing the response action selected, may present an imminent and substantial endangerment to the public health, the welfare, or the environment.

### **3.4 Response to Community Concerns**

Since Cityside Homes is currently building townhomes near the Site, they are buying the older homes nearby. When the fact sheets were passed out to the community residents, it was ascertained that the majority of the community members had moved, or were in the process of moving. The residents interviewed knew about the Site.

### **3.5 Summary of Communication Needs**

The major concern is the danger to the human population in the area since Asbestos has been detected in the soil piles.

## **Section 4.0 EPA'S Community Involvement Program**

The overall goal of EPA's community involvement program is to promote two-way communication between citizens and the EPA and to provide opportunities for meaningful and active involvement by the community in the cleanup process. EPA will implement the initial community involvement activities described below.

### **4.1 The Plan**

The affected neighboring community at large will be kept informed of all activities relevant to the public health and the environment by distribution of Fact Sheets and notifications of progress, findings, and completion of removal activities. Local media, additional fact sheets, and community meetings will be used to keep the affected community informed as needed.

#### **Issue 1: Keeping the public informed and up to date**

##### **Activity 1A: Designate an EPA Community Involvement Coordinator (CIC)**

- **Objective:** To provide a primary liaison between the community and the EPA, and to ensure prompt, accurate, and consistent responses and information dissemination about the site. In those instances where EPA's CIC may be unable to provide adequate information (such as technical issues), inquiries will be directed to the appropriate EPA contact.
- **Method:** EPA will designate a CIC to handle site inquiries and serve as a point of contact for community members. The CIC is appointed by the Region 6 Headquarters. Stephen Harper is the CIC assigned by EPA for the Site.
- **Timing:** The CIC was designated in January, 2014.

##### **Activity 1B: Prepare and distribute site fact sheets and technical summaries**

- **Objective:** To provide citizens with current, accurate, easy-to-read, easy-to-understand information about the Vermiculite Products Site.

- Method: Fact sheets will be distributed to all affected neighboring facilities/citizens and local officials.
- Timing: EPA will prepare and distribute fact sheets as needed.

**Issue 2: Staying current**

**Activity 2A: Provide a toll-free 800 number for the community to contact EPA**

- Objective: To enable citizens to get the latest information available when they want it rather than having to wait for a meeting or a fact sheet, and without incurring any cost.
- Method: EPA has activated the 800 number and will publish it periodically in the local paper and in all fact sheets.
- Timing: The line is currently operational at 1.800.533.3508. .

**Activity 2B: Maintain a mailing list for the Site**

- Objective: To facilitate the distribution of site-specific information to everyone who wants to be kept informed about the Site.
- Method: EPA will create a mailing list that includes all residences adjacent to the Site, in known or suspected paths of migration, or those otherwise affected by the Site. EPA will also solicit interested parties via fact sheets, newspaper articles, public meetings, etc.
- Timing: EPA will begin working on this mailing list immediately and will review/revise it periodically to keep it current.

**Activity 2C: Establish and maintain an Information Repository**

- This will be done as necessary. Currently, this is a removal effort.
- The Repository for the Site is located at the Heights Neighborhood Library, 1302 Heights Blvd, Houston, TX, 77008. The Contact person is Pat Jones, 832.393.1810.

### **Activity 2D: Provide Site and Superfund Information on the internet**

- Objective: To provide key resources for searching and listing both general and specific information about Superfund and hazardous waste issues.
- Method: A Site Status Summary for this site can be found at <http://www.epaossc.net>. Information about EPA and Superfund can be found at:
  1. EPA Headquarters: <http://www.epa.gov>
  2. EPA Region 6: <http://www.epa.gov/earth1r6>
  3. EPA Region 6 Superfund Division: <http://www.epa.gov/region6/6sf/6sf.htm>
- Timing: Site Status Summaries are updated periodically.

### **Activity 2E: Establish and maintain the Administrative Record**

- Objective: To provide residents with a paper trail of all documents, resources, etc. used by the Regional Project Manager and Site Team in reaching all decisions about the Site and its cleanup.
- Method: EPA will provide the Administrative Record for the Site at the local information repository near the Site.
- Timing: The Administrative Record is opened as soon as site investigation begins and remains opened.

### **Issue 3: Community Involvement**

#### **Activity 3A: Make informal visits to the community**

- Objective: To help keep community members informed about the Site, while providing EPA with feedback about site activities and the community's opinion.
- Method: EPA will establish a presence in the community through informal, often unscheduled visits to talk spontaneously with local residents.
- Timing: Throughout the Emergency Removal process and as necessary.

#### **Activity 3B: Revise the Community Involvement Plan**

- Objective: To identify and address community needs, issues, or concerns regarding the Site or the cleanup remedy that are not currently addressed in this Community

Involvement Plan.

- Method: The revised Community Involvement Plan will update the information presented in the previous version of the Community Involvement Plan.
- Timing: EPA will revise the Community Involvement Plan as community concerns warrants or at least every three years until the Site is closed.

#### 4.2 Time Frame Summary for Community Involvement Plan

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>TIME FRAME</b>
<b>Designate an EPA Community Involvement Coordinator (CIC)</b>	<b>Stephen Harper, 214.665.2727 or 1.800.533.3508 (toll free)</b>
<b>Prepare and distribute site fact sheets and technical summaries</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Involve students, parents, teachers through area schools</b>	<b>As needed.</b>
<b>Provide a toll-free "800 number" for the community to contact EPA</b>	<b>1.800.533.3508</b>
<b>Maintain a mailing list for the Site</b>	<b>On going</b>
<b>Provide Site and Superfund information on the Internet</b>	<b>Currently available; update as needed</b>
<b>Conduct special events</b>	<b>As needed</b>
<b>Hold public meetings</b>	<b>As needed</b>
<b>Make informal visits to the community</b>	<b>As needed</b>
<b>Revise the Community Involvement Plan (CIP)</b>	<b>As needed, at least every 3 years.</b>
<b>Establish and maintain Information Repository</b>	<b>As needed.</b>
<b>Establish and maintain the Administrative Record</b>	<b>As needed.</b>

**APPENDIX A**  
**EPA Regional Contacts**

Althea Foster  
On-Scene Coordinator  
US EPA Region 6 (6SF-PR)  
1445 Ross Ave  
Dallas TX 75202  
Tel: 214.665.2268  
Fax: 214.665.6660  
E-mail: [foster.althea@epa.gov](mailto:foster.althea@epa.gov)

Stephen Harper  
Community Involvement Coordinator (SEE)  
US EPA Region 6 (6SF-VO)  
1445 Ross Ave  
Dallas TX 75202  
Tel: 214.665.2727  
Fax: 214.665.6660  
E-mail: [harper.stephen@epa.gov](mailto:harper.stephen@epa.gov)

Mike McAteer  
On-Scene Coordinator  
US EPA Region 6 (6SF-PE)  
1445 Ross Ave  
Dallas TX 75202  
Tel: 214.665.7157  
Fax: 214.665.6660  
E-mail: [mcateer.mike@epa.gov](mailto:mcateer.mike@epa.gov)

**APPENDIX B  
Local Officials**

**Mayor**

Mayor Sylvester Turner  
City of Houston  
P.O. Box 1562  
Houston TX 77251  
Tel: 713.837.0311  
[mayor@houstontx.gov](mailto:mayor@houstontx.gov) or [scheduling@houstontx.gov](mailto:scheduling@houstontx.gov)

**City of Houston Emergency Center**

David Cutler, Director  
Tel: 832.393.2766

Joe Laud, Administrative Manager for Emergency Center  
[joe.lund@houstontx.gov](mailto:joe.lund@houstontx.gov)

**Mayor's Office of Public Safety and Homeland Security**

Dennis J. Storemski, Director  
City Hall Annex  
900 Bagby St., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Houston TX 77002  
Tel: 832.393.0879

**City Council**

City Hall Annex  
900 Bagby Street  
Houston TX 77002

Brenda Stardig, District A

Jerry Davis, District B

**Ellen Cohen, District C      (Vermiculite Products is in District C)**  
**Tel: 832.393.3004**

Dwight Boykins, District D

Dave Martin, District E

Steve Le, District F

Greg Travis, District G

Karla Cisneros, District H

Robert Gallegos, District I

Mike Laster, District J

Larry Green, District K

Mike Knox, At-Large Position 1

David Robinson, At-Large Position 2

Michael Kubosh, At-Large Position 3

Amanda Edwards, At-Large Position 4

Jack Christie, At-Large Position 5

## **Harris County**

### **County Judge**

Ed Emmett, Cty Judge Harris County

1001 Preston, Ste 911

Houston TX 77002

Tel: 713.755.4000

### **Harris County Emergency Management**

Environmental Issues – Paula Warren, 713.724.7030

Public Information Officer – Francisco Sanchez, 713.426.9577

### **County Commissioners**

Rodney Ellis, Precinct 1

Tel: 713.755.6111

Jack Morman, Precinct 2

Tel: 713.755.6220

Steve Radack, Precinct 3

Tel: 713.755.6306

R. Jack Cagle, Precinct 4  
Tel: 713.755.6444

**Sheriff**

Ed Gonzalez  
Tel: 713.755.6044

**Emergency Management Coordinator**

Mark Sloan  
Tel: 713.881.3100

**Deputy Director, Public Works**

Dale A. Rudick  
611 Walker St  
Houston TX 77002  
Tel: 832.395.2500

**TCEQ Houston Office**

5425 Polk St., Ste. H  
Houston TX 77023  
Executive Assistant, LaTrenda McClellan  
Tel: 713.767.3714

**APPENDIX C  
State Officials**

**Texas State Senate**

John Whitmire, Senate District 15  
CAP 1E.13  
Capitol Station  
Austin TX 78711  
Tel: 512.463.0015

**District Office**

803 Yale St.  
Houston TX 77007  
Tel: 713.864.8701

**Texas State Representative**

Sarah Davis, District 134  
EXE2.310  
Capitol Station  
Austin TX 78768  
Tel: 512.463.0389

**District Office**

4148 Bellaire Blvd.  
Houston TX 77025  
Tel: 713.644.7095

**APPENDIX D  
Federal Elected Officials**

**U. S. Senators**

Senator John Cornyn  
517 Hart Senate Office Bldg  
Washington DC 20510  
Tel: 202.224.2934

**District Office**

5300 Memorial Dr., Ste 980  
Houston TX 77007  
Tel: 713.572.3337

Senator Ted Cruz  
Dirksen Senate Office Bldg  
Washington DC 20510  
Tel: 202.224.5922

**District Office**

1919 Smith St, Ste 800  
Houston TX 77002  
Tel: 713.653.3456

**U.S. House of Representatives**

**Congressional District 2**

Ted Poe  
2412 Rayburn House Office Bldg  
Washington DC 20515  
Tel: 202.225.6565

**District Offices**

1801 Kingwood Dr, Ste 240  
Kingwood TX 77339  
Tel: 281.446.0242

**APPENDIX E**  
**POTENTIALLY RESPONSIBLE PARTY**

None at this time

**APPENDIX F  
Media Contacts**

**Newspaper**

Houston Chronicle  
P O Box 4260  
Houston TX 77210  
713.362.7171

**Radio Stations (FM)**

KUHF (88.7 FM)  
4343 Elgin St.  
Houston TX 77204  
Tel: 713.743.0887

**Television Stations**

KPRC (NBC) Channel 2  
8181 Southwest Freeway  
Houston TX 77074  
Tel: 713.778.4713

KTRU (91.7 FM)  
Rice University  
Houston TX 77002  
Tel: 713.348.5878

KUHT (PBS) Channel 8  
4343 Elgin St.  
Houston TX 77204  
Tel: 713.748.8888

**Radio Stations (AM)**

KIKK (650 AM)  
24 Greenway Plaza, #1900  
Houston TX 77046  
Tel: 713.965/0650

KHOU (CBS) Channel 11  
1945 Allen Parkway  
Houston TX 77019  
Tel: 713.526.1111

KTRH (740 AM)  
2000 West Loop  
Houston TX 77027  
Tel: 713.212.8740

KTRK (ABC) Channel 13  
3310 Bissonnet St.  
Houston TX 77005  
Tel: 713.666.0713

KBME (790 AM)  
510 Lovell Blvd.  
Houston TX 77006  
Tel: 713.630.5790

KRIV (FOX) Channel 26  
4251 Southwest Freeway  
Houston TX 77027  
Tel: 713.479.2600

KCOH (1430 AM)  
5011 Almeda Rd.  
Houston TX 77004  
Tel: 713.522.1011

**APPENDIX G**  
**Repository Location**

Heights Neighborhood Library  
1302 Heights Blvd.  
Houston TX 77008  
Tel: 832.393.1810

Pat Jones

**APPENDIX H**  
**Hospitals**

Houston Community Hospital  
427 W. 20<sup>th</sup> Street  
Houston TX 77008  
Tel: 713.803.7777

Memorial Hermann Northwest Hospital  
1635 N. Loop W Freeway  
Houston TX 77008  
Tel: 713.867.2000

**APPENDIX I  
Public Schools**

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

Memorial Elementary School  
6401 Arnot  
Houston TX 77007  
Tel: 713.867.5150  
Maria Teresa Garcia, Principal

Sinclair Elementary School  
6410 Grovewood Lane  
Houston TX 77008  
Tel: 713.867.5161  
Abigail Taylor, Principal

St. Theresa Catholic School  
6623 Rodrigo Street  
Houston TX 77007  
Tel: 713.864.4536  
Melissa Ilski, Principal

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Black Middle School  
1575 Chantilly Lane  
Houston TX 77018  
Tel: 713.613.2505  
Paolo Castagnoli, Principal

**HIGH SCHOOL**

Waltrip High School  
1900 W. 34<sup>th</sup> Street  
Houston TX 77018  
Tel: 713.688.1361  
Edward Dale Mitchell, Principal

APPENDIX J  
Community Centers

Love Community Center  
1000 W 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Houston TX 77008  
713.867.0497

Milroy Community Center  
1205 Yale Street  
Houston TX 77008  
713.867.0397

**APPENDIX K  
Churches**

**All Saints Catholic Church  
215 E 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Houston TX 77008  
713.864.2653**

**Lazybrook Baptist Church  
6427 Pineshade Ln  
Houston TX 77008  
713.861.6177**

**Resurrection Community Church  
2025 W 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Houston TX 77008  
713.861.9149**

**Resurrection Life Fellowship  
730 E 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Houston TX 77008  
713.862.9651**