

Introduction

This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Fact Sheet provides information regarding the interim cleanup activities at Susie E. Tolbert Elementary School. The cleanup, that began on July 16, 2018 and ended on August 12, 2018, was a Fairfax Street Wood Treaters Superfund Site (Site) activity. The purpose of the fact sheet is to ensure the community is informed about the details of the project.

1. Why was there an interim action at Susie E. Tolbert Elementary School?

During the Remedial Design (RD), samples were collected on the school property. The sampling results indicated arsenic concentrations slightly above EPA's identified cleanup level for the Site. The levels detected are below EPA's Removal Management Level (RML) of 39 mg/kg, which was used in the removal action done on the school property in 2011, and do not pose an imminent threat to public health or the environment. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (the State) agreed to remove the impacted soils prior to school resuming. The soil excavation on the school playground area began on July 16, 2018 and was completed on August 12, 2018, prior to school resuming on August 13, 2018.

2. Why did the State take the lead on the cleanup?

EPA selected the remedy or how the contamination will be cleaned up in the Record of Decision (ROD) on August 22, 2017. Once the remedy is selected EPA must design how the contamination will be removed in the RD. EPA does not have the funds to start the cleanup known as the Remedial Action (RA) until the RD is completed. Therefore, the State agreed to take the early action before school began.

3. What health and safety measures were implemented to protect the workers and the community?

Measures were implemented to prevent any potential exposure risks and health and safety hazards for workers and the public. This was addressed by controlling access to the site, preventing public vehicular and pedestrian access to the work area, and controlling dust and stormwater. A health and safety specialist was on site during the excavation to monitor the safety procedures and dust levels.

The State conducted dust monitoring in the work area and along the property boundary during cleanup activities. A black filter fabric was also installed along the northern fence line as a supplemental dust mitigation measure to control dust from entering the residential properties. The dust monitoring included using dust meters to collect real-time data. No dust concentrations were reported above action levels.



Figure 1: Dust Meter Being Used On Site

Site work was completed in accordance with safety rules and procedures and applicable local, state, and federal regulations, including the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and United States Department of Transportation regulatory requirements. Engineering controls, personal protective equipment, and personal monitoring were used to control risk to site worker's health and safety.

4. How was the contaminated soil managed to ensure it didn't move into the community?

The impacted soil was removed starting from the northeast side of the property and towards the bus turnaround. The impacted soil was temporarily stored near the existing gate on plastic sheeting, before being loaded into the trucks on the asphalt. The stockpiles were covered with plastic when not being actively loaded or unloaded. The trucks transporting the soil did not enter the excavation areas and were loaded entirely on the asphalt bus turnaround. Plastic sheeting was also placed underneath the trucks to prevent excavated soil from touching the asphalt surface. The trucks were then covered and instructed to drive slowly down Pullman Avenue towards West 13th Street. The truck tires were visually inspected for soil prior to departure from the site.

Equipment and vehicles, including front-end loaders, vacuum trucks, and excavators, leaving the excavation areas were decontaminated prior to entry to non-working areas. Any soil present on the tires of the dump trucks delivering clean backfill to the site was swept up using brooms and a commercial street sweeper.

5. Where was the excavated soil disposed?

The excavated soil was transported to the Chesser Island Landfill in Folkston, Georgia for disposal as non-hazardous waste. Prior to transporting to the landfill, each truck was required to stop at the Pilot Travel Center at 4075 Jones Branch Road to collect a back-up weigh ticket. These tickets were compared to the weigh ticket provided by the Chesser Island Landfill for quality control purposes.

6. How was stormwater controlled to ensure potentially contaminated water didn't move into the community?



Figure 2: Excavation Near the Retention Pond

The State maintained stormwater controls, which included silt fencing or hay bales. The approximate area for the excavation is over one acre and required a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and a Notice of Intent to Use Generic Permit for Stormwater Discharge from Large and Small Construction Activities. Specialized equipment along the retention pond to the east of the property along with silt fencing along the perimeter of the excavation were used. In addition, stormwater collected in the excavation areas was removed and disposed of at Liquid Environmental Solutions in Jacksonville, Florida. Stormwater samples were collected prior to disposal and submitted to a certified laboratory for proper waste characterization. Approximately 37,000 gallons of stormwater were disposed of as non-hazardous waste.

7. Is the water safe to drink?

Yes, a public water system serves the schools and neighborhood. Jacksonville Electric Authority (JEA) provides water that is treated and regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act. For information about JEA's water quality please see https://www.jea.com/About/Water_Supply/Water_Quality_Reports/.

8. How has the community been notified of the work at the school?

EPA sent postcards on July 5, 2018 and fact sheets on July 17, 2018 to the local community surrounding Fairfax Street Wood Treaters Site and the school. In addition, the Fairfax Street Wood Treaters website has been updated with school cleanup information and the July Fact Sheet. If you didn't receive the original postcard or fact sheet in the mail please contact Ron Tolliver so the EPA can ensure you receive pertinent updates on the cleanup work going forward. Ron's contact information is located at the bottom of this FAQ handout.

9. Were the children's parents notified of the work at the school?

Yes, parents were notified. An email was sent to parents on July 11, 2018. The school provided notification about the work that would be conducted on the campus the following week. A letter will be sent to parents and guardians at the end of August, with an update on the status of the work. The school district, along with EPA and FDEP, believes communication about these matters is essential and will continue to support the EPA's commitment to keep the school community informed. For additional information about the communication provided to parents, please contact Media Relations Supervisor for Duval County Public Schools, Lauren Ricks at 904-390-2211.

10. When will the cleanup at the site and residential properties begin?

EPA is planning to have the RD completed by September 30, 2018. Once the RD is completed, EPA will begin the process of procuring the contractor to conduct the remediation work. EPA will host a meeting in the Fall 2018 to discuss the details and schedule for the additional cleanup work at the site and the surrounding residential properties identified in the ROD. For additional information about the cleanup please see the ROD at <https://semspub.epa.gov/work/04/11068632.pdf>.

11. What is next?

There is a small area of soil next to the oak tree, on the side of the school, that is slightly above the arsenic cleanup level. Children do not play in this area and the arsenic will be removed during the winter break. The arsenic concentration is below the RML and does not pose an imminent threat to public health or the environment.

EPA and FDEP will be hosting a meeting to answer additional questions related to the cleanup at the school and the Fairfax Street Wood Treaters Superfund Site on September 11, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. at the Susie Tolbert Elementary School.



Figure 3: Excavation Area

Site Location and Background

The Fairfax Street Wood Treating Site is in a predominantly residential area of Jacksonville owned by Fairfax Land Management, Inc., and was formerly used as a wood treating facility. From 1980 to 2010, the facility pressure-treated utility poles, pilings, heavy timber, and plywood lumber products using the wood treating preservative chromated copper arsenate (CCA). Some of the CCA preservative dripped onto the ground during the wood treating, which resulted in soil and sediment contamination. EPA stabilized the site during the 2010 thru 2012 timeframe, while investigating the extent of contamination and assessing the risk to human health and the environment.

EPA issued the final long-term remedy for the site in the Record of Decision that was signed on August 22, 2017. EPA immediately began preparations to carry out the approved cleanup activities with the start of the Remedial Design. It is expected the Remedial Design will be completed by October 2018. Additional public meetings, public availability sessions and/or public communications will be held prior to initiating field work for other phases of the cleanup.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Information Repository

Dallas Graham Public Library
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