



St. Joseph County Health Department

"Promoting physical and mental health and facilitating the prevention of disease, injury and disability for all St. Joseph County residents"

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June 23, 2016

Mr. Mike Beslow, On-Scene Coordinator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5
77 W. Jackson Blvd (SE-5J)
Chicago, IL 60604

Dear Mr. Beslow:

On May 26th 2016, the St. Joseph County Health Department (SJCHD) was notified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of a vapor intrusion issue in several homes near the Galen Myers Dump/Drum Salvage Superfund Site (Galen Myers Site) in Osceola.

The SJCHD considers this issue a high priority and requests that EPA take immediate action to provide vapor mitigation systems to the 7 homes that were found to have exceedances for trichloroethylene (TCE) during the most recent sampling event.

EPA sampled indoor air at 11 properties, revealing that 7 homes had TCE concentrations above the Removal Management Level (RML) of 2 ug/m³. RMLs are risk-based concentrations used to identify areas that warrant prompt action by EPA to remove the source of contamination. The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) has further advised EPA and SJCHD that the TCE measured in 2 of these homes were at a level high enough (at or above 6 ug/m³) that mitigation measures should be initiated immediately.

EPA's Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) 2011 toxicity assessment concluded that TCE exposure poses potential human health hazards for non-cancer toxicity to multiple organs and systems and to the developing fetus, including fetal cardiac malformations. This and other findings in the IRIS assessment of TCE indicates that women in the first trimester of pregnancy are one of the most sensitive populations to TCE inhalation exposure. (Memo: "EPA Region 9 Response Action Levels and Recommendations to Address Near-Term Inhalation Exposures to TCE in Air from Subsurface Vapor Intrusion", Enrique Manzanilla, Director Region 9 Superfund Division, July 9, 2014).

The Galen Myers Site is a former drum reclamation operation where trichloroethylene (TCE) is the major contaminant of concern for soil and groundwater contamination. EPA determined in 1994 that TCE contaminated groundwater had migrated south toward a residential area. The TCE in the groundwater slowly evaporates through the soil and into the buildings above.

I would appreciate it if your staff would keep Mark Espich informed of the status of the installation of the vapor mitigation systems at mespich@co.st-joseph.in.us.

Sincerely,

Luis Galup, M.D.
Health Officer

Cc: Jaime Brown, USEPA, Region 5
Sam Borries, USEPA, Region 5
Jason El-Zein, USEPA, Region 5

Please send all electronic correspondence for the Environmental Health Services Division to envirohd@co.st-joseph.in.us