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# Cleanup of PCBs resumes

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**TEMPLETON** — The U.S., Environmental Protection Agency has resumed cleanup of a former furniture factory, now that winter weather has ended.

Several buildings were demolished and removed last year at the former Temple Stuart furniture factory in Baldwinville after friable asbestos was found in the buildings during an investigation of weather damage.

Land near the edge of the property had been used as a dump and was already under investigation by the Department of Environmental Protection for possible contamination of the soil. The combined efforts of the EPA and state Department of Environmental Protection led to the discovery that some plumes of contamination had traveled beyond the factory property.

Problems in the neighborhood are under investigation and corrective measures are in the planning stage.

The last owner of the Temple Stuart property was listed as American Tissue Mills of Massachusetts. The company is listed under a variety of names, including, recently, American Paper Products.

An abandoned paper mill on Mill Street that was also owned by American Tissue Mills of Massachusetts is also being investigated by the EPA.

Mary Ellen Stanton, site coordinator at the Temple Stuart property, said Shaw Environmental and Infrastructure has started excavating and stockpiling for removal soil on the site contaminated by polychlorinated biphenyls.

The soil will be removed to a depth of about a foot unless testing indicates that the contamination exceeds 15 parts per

million.

During the removal the material will be tested for concentration levels of PCBs. Last year, samplings indicated that the concentration was around 10 parts per million. Ms. Stanton said she does not anticipate removing any more buildings on the site unless workers find a surprise in the subsurface testing.

Ms. Stanton said she expects the removal will cost less than \$500,000 unless testing reveals an unexpected problem. Removal of the material will probably be to a site out of state, she said. The final destination and removal depend on the low bid for disposal, but the material will be almost certain to leave the state.

There will be some dust visible from the site, but it is being monitored and should not be a problem. If there is a problem the area will be treated to hold down the dust.

Ms. Stanton is passing out circulars in the neighborhood explaining the project. Information will be available at various spots around town, and questions may be resolved by calling the command post at (978) 939-7775.

"I want to emphasize that residents should not trespass on the site because the work areas are very dangerous for anyone not properly equipped. Visitors are allowed at the command post, but nowhere else on the fenced-in property," Ms. Stanton said.

No one should be walking on the road through the property because it is not safe, she said.

Cleanup of the neighborhood outside the fence where tests were taken last year is still in the planning stage. Michael Barry is in charge of the neighborhood cleanup and the investigation and cleanup for the Mill Street paper mill.

Mr. Barry said that soil will have to be removed from some residential yards. Last year the EPA sampled 35 yards in the neighborhood of Temple Stuart and 28 needed soil removal, he said. Mr. Barry said he would like to test 10 or 20 more yards.

He said he expects that the tests would show a need to remove soil from the same percentage of yards as the original tests showed, which means between 6 and 16 additional yards might be affected, he said.

He said that work on each yard will be different. In most cases, the soil removals will be relatively shallow, unless there has been active digging in the yard.

Mr. Barry is submitting a cost estimate for the project this week. Because of the size of the project the cost could be fairly high. A source of funding must be found before the work can start. He said he would like to see the work start by the time the earth removal is finished at the factory.

Although the yard cleanup will be the first priority because it affects families directly, there is a need to find funding for the paper mill project, which is close to the Otter River. Piping into the river is still open at the paper mill.

The inflow and outflow ends of the pipes will be plugged to remove the potential for leaking chemicals into the river, Mr. Barry said.

There has been some vandalism in that area, and the EPA will remove several drums and test and remove liquids in the tanks near the mill.

The mill is considered a source of imminent hazard and will be investigated and possibly fenced in. It is possible that asbestos in the mill and materials that are now contained could be exposed because of the deterioration of the mill or could become a fire hazard.