

48 Baldwinville homes involved in EPA cleanup

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TEMPLETON — Soil contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls has been excavated from 48 residential properties near the former Temple Stuart factory in the Baldwinville section of town by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency since the EPA completed a \$3.5 million cleanup of the furniture plant in 2002.

The cleanup of residential properties began in 2003, involving the excavation of more than 12,000 tons of contaminated soil from residential properties in the neighborhood around the former factory. The material was shipped to an authorized disposal facility, according to a press release yesterday from the EPA.

The contamination is believed to have settled on nearby residential property from the burning of waste at the Temple Stuart Co. plant.

The original EPA cleanup dealt with asbestos removal

from factory buildings and the removal of contaminated structures. The residential cleanup involved the removal of PCBs, a toxic chemical discovered in residential properties, according to the EPA.

Mike Barry, the EPA on-site coordinator, said soil removed last year from 26 properties closest to the former factory was shipped to a facility in Loudon, N.H., for disposal. This spring, the EPA returned to restore the properties by backfilling the lots with clean sand, soil and loam.

This year, he said, the project was expanded to include another 23 properties, which were sampled as part of the second phase of the cleanup work. This fall both groups of properties are scheduled for final restoration with tree and shrub planting.

According to the press release, the EPA tried to ensure that the contamination was cleaned up as quickly as possi-

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ter County. Lorraine Kiriakis, 4-H extension educator, said the decision to open up participa-

EPA cleanup removes PCBs

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ble by working in phases and consulting with homeowners.

The residential sites worked on this year are some distance from the former factory, beyond the Elm Street—Route 202 area west of the factory.

According to the press release, the EPA will begin sampling about 30 properties later this fall to determine whether additional excavation will be necessary. Cleanup costs, to date, are about \$5 million.

This year, the EPA also spent about \$2 million to remove asbestos and chemicals at the former Baldwinville Products paper mill. The owner of both factories is American Tissue Mills of Massachusetts.