



John Day Vapor Response John Day, Oregon June 11, 2015

An EPA Emergency Response Team and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality have been helping the City of John Day investigate unusual odors in and around homes and commercial buildings along South Canyon Boulevard and SW Brent Street between SW 2nd Avenue and SW 6th Avenue.

What have we found so far?

We have sampled and tested air, soil and groundwater from homes, businesses, monitoring wells, and sewer manholes in the affected neighborhood. Air monitoring will continue for highly affected residences. We have found gasoline and diesel in the groundwater in some locations. Vapors analyzed from under the area include components of gasoline and petroleum. See the table at left for more details about the data collection work.

What happens next?

EPA has nearly completed our work to address the immediate health concerns and find the source of the vapors, although we do not have all the answers yet. We are turning the remaining work over to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. EPA and DEQ have been working together since the initial notification. The DEQ project manager and technical staff have arrived in John Day and we are working together on transition activities.

What's being done to fix the problem?

DEQ and their contractors will soon install extraction wells to remove any remaining vapors and/or contaminated groundwater from underneath homes and the surrounding area (see example of potential system on back). These extraction wells pull contaminated material from the ground and treat it. Installation may include some noisy activity and some noticeable vapors. DEQ will monitor the systems for performance, noise levels, and noticeable vapors in the outdoor air.

DEQ will continue to work with the potentially responsible party on source investigation and control of petroleum releases. EPA installed temporary upgrades to the basement or crawlspace ventilation at a few houses where indoor air quality remained a concern. Large fans were placed in these homes with elevated vapors, to create positive pressure which keeps vapors from entering the home. DEQ will maintain those temporary upgrades, or they will install more permanent measures if that becomes necessary.

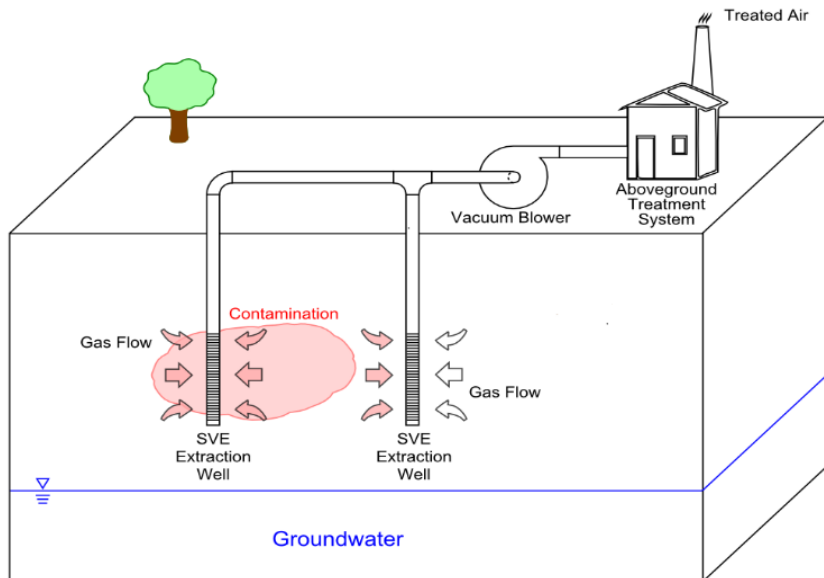
64 homes or properties have been assessed and/or monitored

Initially 22 homes were above action level (5000 ppb of total VOC's), currently we only have 1*. All others are below the action level due to venting by homeowners, and positive pressure systems that have been installed by EPA

101 total samples taken including air, potential source, soil and water

Up to 31 manholes in the sanitary system have been monitored daily since May 26

*the only remaining property above action levels is unoccupied



This diagram displays an example of a vapor extraction system. Depending on additional assessment, other extraction treatment options may be considered.

What can I do that will help?

- Read and follow the Oregon Health Authority's message "Preventing Health Problems from Volatile Chemical Exposure" attached to this fact sheet.
- Ventilation is still the most important measure that can be taken to get rid of vapors. Leave windows open for air flow. Create a cross draft by opening two windows and placing a fan in one of them. Try to bring in fresh air from outside.
- Fill in cracks or holes in cement basement floors and walls with products such as foam sealer.
- Put down a vapor barrier in crawl spaces where vapors might come up from the ground. Black plastic is one easily available option.
- Limit your time in any room where you smell an unusual odor.

Helpful Resources

If you smell an unusual odor in your house, call the City of John Day Dispatch at: 541-575-0030.

If you have concerns about the health effects of vapors, call John Combs at Grant County Health at 541-575-0429.

For other Information, call Bryn Thoms, Project Manager, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality at: 971-563-7298

For more information about the project details, go to DEQ's Environmental Site Information System (ECSI) and enter site number 2867. <http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/ecsi/ecsi.htm>

Visit the EPA Emergency Response website at: www.epaossc.net/johnday