

Adams Dry Cleaners Site

Quincy, MA

U.S. EPA | HAZARDOUS WASTE PROGRAM AT EPA NEW ENGLAND

THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND REMOVAL PROGRAM

responds to chemical, biological and radiological releases and large-scale national emergencies, including homeland security incidents. EPA conducts short term cleanups in the removal program when necessary to protect human health and the environment by either funding response actions directly or overseeing and enforcing actions conducted by potentially responsible parties.



SITE DESCRIPTION

The Adams Dry Cleaners site is a former dry-cleaning business which operated from the 1950s to 2015. The shop, located at 32 Independence Avenue in Quincy, MA, is closed and the building is unoccupied. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) requested assistance from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) due to elevated contamination levels.

BACKGROUND

Contamination at the Adams Dry Cleaners site was first reported to the MassDEP in May 2016. The contaminant of concern is tetrachloroethylene, also known as perchloroethylene (PCE), which is used as the cleaning agent in the dry-cleaning process. PCE is one of a group of chemicals known as chlorinated volatile organic compounds (CVOCs). When CVOCs are released into the environment, they can move in the soil gas and groundwater and enter buildings in a process known as vapor intrusion. People can be exposed to CVOCs by breathing the air where vapor intrusion is occurring.

The MassDEP worked with the property owner and dry cleaner to investigate the extent of contamination in homes and businesses in the area and installed venting systems to address potential exposures at levels exceeding the imminent hazard concentrations. On August 18, 2021, the MassDEP referred the site to EPA for assistance to:

- Assess and address chlorinate volatile organic compounds (CVOCs) at the former dry cleaner property;
- Reduce the on-going vapor intrusion of tetrachloroethylene (PCE) at an abutting residence by evaluating the performance of the venting system, called a Sub-Slab Depressurization system;
- Consider additional steps to further reduce the vapor intrusion pathway; and
- Investigate potential vapor intrusion of contaminants at residential and commercial properties based on the direction that groundwater flows from the site.

KEY CONTACTS:

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If you would like additional information about tetrachloroethylene, please refer to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/TSP/ToxFAQs/ToxFAQsDetails.aspx?faqid=264&toxid=48> and Public Health Statement <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/TSP/PHS/PHS.aspx?phsid=263&toxid=48>.

If you have health related questions about tetrachloroethylene you may contact:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Bureau of Environmental Health
250 Washington Street Boston, MA 02108
Phone: 617-624-5757
www.mass.gov/dph/environmental_health

NEXT STEPS

EPA will be conducting indoor air sampling at businesses and residential properties surrounding the site. EPA is coordinating with the MassDEP and the City and will work closely with the property owners to communicate sampling plans and results. Any plans for cleanup of the site will be based on our evaluation of the results of the sample collection and analysis.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 concerns, EPA will be following agency protocols including masking indoors, limiting the number of staff onsite, and social distancing when possible.

Beginning in early fall 2021, EPA and its contractors expect to be in the neighborhood surrounding the site to begin sampling. Contractors for EPA may be seen wearing protective equipment due to their direct contact with materials and potential contamination.

For information in Spanish please visit: <https://www.quincyma.gov/epaspanish.htm>

For information in Portuguese please visit: <https://www.quincyma.gov/epaportuguese.htm>

For information in Chinese please visit: <https://www.quincyma.gov/epachinese.htm>

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