Temple-Stuart Update

Number 5 - May 2004

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is working with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and the Town of Templeton to remove friable asbestos, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and other hazardous substances from the former Temple-Stuart facility in Baldwinville. Below is an update on activities.

Recent Site Activities

In December, work crews began excavating PCB-contaminated soil from interior areas of the property and staging it for disposal off-site. In January, about 1200 tons of soil were trucked off-site for disposal. The site was then closed down for winter.

In late April, work crews began excavating PCB contaminated soils from all unrestricted areas of the site, including along Holman Street, which is visible to nearby residents. The command post trailers were moved across Holman Street.

Approximately 3200 tons of PCB contaminated soil have been excavated and stockpiled on the former factory slab. EPA expects to transport this material offsite for disposal by June 30, 2004.

Site restoration activities are underway and include filling excavated areas with sandy topsoil, and hydro-seeding accessible areas with a hardy "highway mix" of grasses.

Once the restoration activities are completed EPA's work at the facility will be done. The two warehouses, small garage, two storage silos, water tower, and various slab floors of the facility will remain in place. Although the temporary fence surrounding the work area will be removed, the site is still under private ownership, and trespassing is discouraged.

What to Expect During the Last Phase of Work

- ❑ On-site workers will be wearing personal protective gear while performing their jobs. This may include impermeable white suits, yellow booties, hard hats, and possibly respirators.
- ❑ Personal protective gear for on-site workers is mandated by federal law and does not mean that you are in any danger.
- ❑ The EPA on-scene coordinator or his representative will be on-site to ensure that all health and safety protocols and proper work practices are being followed.
- ❑ Soil will be stockpiled and covered on site until definitive lab results are available to determine their eventual disposal. They will be transported off the site by the end of June.
- ❑ Prior to leaving the site, all trucks carrying hazardous substances off-site for disposal will be inspected to ensure that all tie-downs are secure and all soil and/or containers are covered. Any vehicle leaving the site will undergo a tire inspection and / or cleanup to ensure that contaminated soil is not leaving the work area.

For More Information

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Mary Ellen Stanton
On-Scene Coordinator - Temple Stuart Site
617-918-1256 (office)
978-939-7775 (on-site trailer)
617-312-4715 (cell)

Mike Barry
On-Scene Coordinator - Residential Properties
617-918-1344 (office)
978-939-7775 (on-site trailer)
617-257-2251 (cell)

Angela Bonarrigo
Community Involvement Coordinator
617-918-1034

MA Department of Environmental Protection
Central Regional Office
Denise Child
508-767-2846

Town of Templeton
Board of Health
Health Agent
Richard C. Stevens
978-939-2377

EPA thanks the Town of Templeton for its invaluable assistance during the course of the Temple Stuart Removal Action

What are PCBs?

PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) are a family of man-made chemicals that contain 209 different variations, or congeners. PCBs are typically found in the environment as mixtures of different congeners. There are no known natural sources of PCBs. PCBs are typically oily liquids, ranging from colorless to light yellow in color. They have no smell or taste. Because PCBs do not burn easily and are a good insulating material, PCBs have been widely used as coolants and lubricants in transformers, capacitors, and other electrical equipment. Consumer products that may contain PCBs include old fluorescent lighting fixtures, hydraulic fluids and electrical devices or appliances containing PCB capacitors made before PCB use was stopped.

The manufacture of PCBs was stopped in the United States in 1977 because of evidence that PCBs build up in the environment and cause harmful effects.

Although PCBs are no longer manufactured, they are very persistent chemicals and once in the environment, do not break down easily. While they tend to remain attached to particles of soil and any process that moves soil can also move the attached PCB, PCBs are widely distributed throughout the environment and can be found at background levels in the outdoor air, on soil surfaces and in water.