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Testing Indoor Air and Soil Gas

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will collect and analyze samples of indoor air and soil gas at the El Londri site in San Juan, Puerto Rico. El Londri is an active dry-cleaning facility and surrounding properties to determine if chemical vapors are entering the buildings.

This information will help EPA determine if chlorinated volatile organic compounds, or CVOCs, from past dry-cleaning operations have contaminated the soil and groundwater at the site and are posing a risk to people's health through subsurface intrusion.

EPA will sample within a 100-foot radius of the site, covering properties such as businesses, lodging facilities, residential homes, and roads. EPA will request access from property owners and tenants before conducting any sampling.



The photo above shows the approximate location of the active El Londri dry-cleaning facility.

Depending on the results of this assessment, EPA may expand the study area to include additional properties.



Work in Your Neighborhood

Getting permission to access properties: EPA will coordinate with home and business owners to gain access to structures so EPA can sample air and soil gas to determine if there is any exposure to CVOCs.

Intrusive Sampling: EPA will drill a small hole in the slab of the structure and insert a port, which will be leveled with the floor to prevent tripping hazards. Rugs, tables, and chairs can be placed over the port after EPA collects the samples. EPA will coordinate with owners and tenants on the schedule of events, which may take up to 3 days.

Assessment Activities: The sample results will help EPA determine if people are being exposed to CVOCs. If EPA finds that chemical vapors are entering into the buildings, EPA will ensure that systems are installed to vent out the vapors to protect people from being exposed.

Chlorinated volatile organic compounds, or CVOCs, are chemicals containing chlorine used in industrial degreasing, dry cleaning, and manufacturing. CVOCs frequently sink into groundwater causing long-term environmental contamination and posing risks through vapor intrusion. For more information on CVOCs, visit: <https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/what-are-volatile-organic-compounds-vocs>.





The figure above illustrates a conceptual model of subsurface intrusion, which is when hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants move from shallow groundwater into overlying structures through sumps, and/or cracks. The hazardous substances are released from a facility, contaminating the subsurface soil and groundwater, which then migrates into buildings in the form of soil gas.

Past Activities

In May 2022, EPA found elevated levels of tetrachloroethylene, or PCE, and trichloroethylene, or TCE, in soil gas and groundwater samples after collecting soil gas, soil, and groundwater samples from the El Londri site. PCE and TCE are forms of CVOs.

For more information on PCE and TCE, visit:
<https://wwwn.cdc.gov/TSP/ToxFAQs/ToxFAQsLanding.aspx>.



Site Background

The El Londri site is located at 2060 Calle Loiza in a mixed residential and commercial urban area in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The site is an active laundry and dry-cleaning facility that started operations in 1942. The facility may have operated under different names and historically used tetrachloroethylene, or PCE, during its operations.

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