

Florida Department of Health Releases Report of Investigation on Former Fuzzell Wholesale Nursery Site



Near the corner of Flatwoods and Casteen roads, West Leesburg, Florida



Health Consultation Report Summary

June 2002

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In June 2000, the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) asked the Florida Department of Health (DOH) to look at some soil and water samples from a site in Leesburg. In February, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) took the samples on and near the former Fuzzell Nursery. The former nursery is near the corner of Flatwoods and Casteen roads in west Leesburg.

DOH Conclusions

Except for arsenic, Florida DOH found that none of the chemicals for which the samples were tested were present above health guidelines.

A list of all chemicals tested for can be found in the full Health Consultation report. Arsenic was found above the highly protective guidelines, but at levels so low that DOH would not expect any health effects.

The samples do not indicate any health risks.

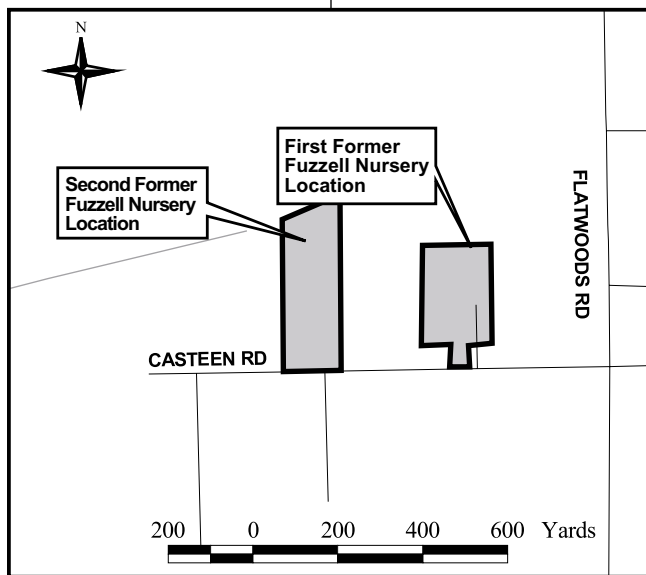
However, questions about the quality of sample data have led DOH to classify the site as “an indeterminate public health hazard.”

About the Site

The former Fuzzell nursery, along with many other businesses, began using the fungicide Benlate 50 DF in 1987. Treated plants began to have problems and die. New plants would not grow in the treated areas. DuPont, manufacturer of Benlate, found that some lots of the fungicide had elevated levels of a herbicide, atrazine, in them. DuPont recalled those lots. Then, in 1991, DuPont recalled all Benlate 50 DF. At that time, DuPont compensated some growers for Benlate-related crop damage. The owner of the present site was given compensation.

In October 1999, a resident living near the former Fuzzell Wholesale Nursery petitioned the U.S. ATSDR to look at health problems in the community. Florida DEP gathered and analyzed samples, then gave its results to

Florida DOH. DOH looked at the samples to determine whether any risks to human health exist from chemicals at the site.



About the Task

This sample analysis was part of an investigation being conducted by the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. The federal agency ATSDR funds 100% of the Florida DOH health assessment activities.

This health assessment compared the levels of all chemicals in the samples to national health guidelines. The national guidelines are set at levels much lower than

the point at which a chemical has been found to have any health effects. The Florida DOH health consultation report lists the levels of all chemicals tested for.

DOH Recommendation

If future investigations identify site-related chemicals that pose a potential public health threat, the DOH will conduct a new public health risk assessment.

To Obtain a Copy of the Health Consultation

You may pick up a copy of the Health Consultation report at the Lake County Public Library, 204 North Fifth Street, Leesburg. We will mail you a copy if you request it. You also may call toll free during work hours to request one at 877-798-2772.

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What the Florida DOH and ATSDR do.

- Seek out the concerns and questions of the affected community and respond to them,
- Conduct evaluations of potential health effects, if any, at a hazardous waste site,
- Advise the public on how to protect themselves from future exposure to site chemicals,
- Inform communities of our findings and recommendations concerning the site,
- Inform the community's healthcare professionals of our findings, and give them information,
- Do biological exposure investigations, if indicated, and
- Advise cleanup and other agencies on health issues.

What the Florida DOH and ATSDR do NOT do.

- We do not make or enforce laws or rules concerning hazardous waste.
- We do not provide medical services.
- We do not provide funds for cleanup or relocating people.
- We usually do not take samples, using those taken by agencies funded to do that work.
- We do not do worker investigations.

For more health information:

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