

## Florida Department of Health Finds Site Contaminated But Not a Current Public Health Hazard

Comments From Public Due By March 14, 2003

Florida Department of Health will hold a Public Meeting at the Brown Eastside Public Library Branch, 1390 Harrison Street, February 13, 2003. Two Identical Sessions—10:30 AM–Noon and 6:00–7:30 PM

### Come Hear Department of Health Findings, Give Your Input and Ask Questions

The Florida Department of Health (DOH) has completed its investigation of public health around the Kerr-McGee site at 1611 Talleyrand Avenue in Jacksonville. The DOH report is now available to the public in draft form. This purpose of this draft form is to get public input: comments, questions, and concerns.

The Florida DOH will hold a public meeting Thursday, February 13, 2003 to discuss with nearby residents DOH findings and recommendations, and to answer community health questions. The meeting will be held in the Brown Eastside Public Library Building at 1390 Harrison Street.

Representatives from U.S. EPA are scheduled to attend to answer questions about cleanup and sampling.

### About the Site

The 31-acre Kerr-McGee property is on the St. Johns River side of Talleyrand Avenue. For 85 years, from 1893 to 1978, several companies made, stored, and distributed fertilizers and pesticides at this site. **The levels of many chemicals on this property, if people were exposed to them, would be likely to cause health problems.**

Other contaminated sites surround the Kerr-McGee property. The Kerr-McGee site, along with other nearby sites, have contributed to contaminated sediments in Deer Creek. Deer Creek runs through the area and into the St. Johns River. Where the loading docks used to be at the river at the Kerr-McGee site, sediments also are contaminated.

### What Did DOH Find?

The most important DOH finding is that the site is not a current public health hazard. It is not considered a current public health hazard because the public is not known to be going onto the site. In addition, it now is mostly covered by vegetation that minimizes dust moving off the site.

**However, people could become ill if they were exposed to contaminated surface soil on the site, shallow groundwater under or near**

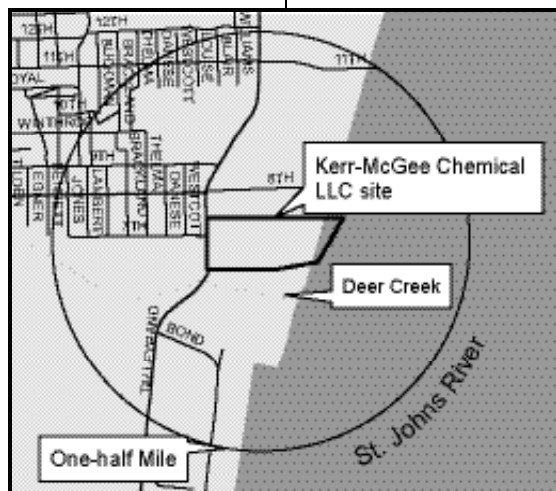
**the site, or sediments in the St. Johns River near the site.**

The soil, underground water (groundwater), and sediments in the river at the edge of the site have chemicals at levels of concern. The site is fenced, with prominent signs warning people to stay off. Access to the river at this point would have to be from a boat as land access is restricted.

Florida DOH found the following chemicals in the soil at the Kerr-McGee site. All of them are present at levels that could cause

health effects if people are exposed to them.

- aldrin
- arsenic
- heptachlor/heptachlor epoxide
- hexachlorocyclohexane
- lead
- chlordane
- toxaphene
- dieldrin
- dichlorodiphenyl trichloroethane and dichlorodiphenyl dichloroethane (DDT/DDE/DDD)



## Was the Community Exposed in the Past?

The Florida DOH Superfund Health Assessment Team is a state agency funded by the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). The agency looks at hazardous waste sites to find out if there are any public health hazards. Its primary concern is the safety of people now.

DOH looks at the chemicals at a site and the amounts of those chemicals. Then they research possible health effects from chemicals at those levels. The scientists must know what chemicals are present, and how much of each is present. They also must know how the exposure occurred, and for how long the exposure lasted. Scientists cannot know what effect to expect unless they know all of this information.

At Kerr-McGee, there is no way of knowing how much dust got off the site. No one knows the days when exposures might have happened, or for how long each exposure went on. No one knows what chemicals might have been in the dust each time it blew off the site. There are no air-monitoring data on which to assess the public health threat in the past from dust from this site.

## What About Past Worker Exposures?

In the past, some workers may have been exposed to chemicals on their jobs. DOH has sent its report on this site to U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Agency (OSHA) and the National Institutes of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). OSHA and NIOSH are the federal agencies that oversee worker safety and health issues.

## Future Exposures

This site could be a public health hazard in the future. This could happen if contaminated soil is disturbed, before the site is cleaned up, or during cleanup. It is possible then that dust could move off the site and come in contact with people. People also could be exposed if the use of the land is changed to residential before it is cleaned up to a level protective of health.

## What is a Public Health Assessment?

A Public Health Assessment (PHA) is a way the federal ATSDR and Florida DOH can find out if a site is a public

health hazard. It also recommends to the public and the involved agencies what needs to be done to protect public health.

Health scientists look at what chemicals, in what amounts, are present at the site. Then they compare those amounts to national guideline amounts. These guidelines are set far below known or suspected levels associated with health effects. To further protect the public, Florida DOH uses the guidelines developed for children. If chemicals are not present at levels high enough to be associated with health effects for children, DOH would not expect to see any health effects in adults.

## Public Meeting

Two repeated sessions:

10:30AM – Noon and

6PM – 7:30PM

at Brown Eastside Public  
Library, 1390 Harrison Street.

**Thursday,  
February 13, 2003**

## What is Florida DOH recommending?

Florida DOH has recommended the following:

1. Control dust; monitor air for metals and chlorinated pesticides; provide breathing protection for people who go onto the site.
2. Ensure that the public does not have access to the site.
3. Ensure that people do not drink contaminated groundwater at the site or near it.
4. Ensure that people do not have access to contaminated sediments of the St. Johns River at the Kerr-McGee site.

## How can you get more information?

Florida DOH has placed copies of the PHA report in the, Eastside branch library, 1390 Harrison St., and in the Main Library, 122 N. Ocean St. Call Beth Copeland at DOH in Tallahassee, toll free during business hours, 1-877-798-2772, for a copy to be mailed to you.

**We want to know your concerns. We want your input. Please take a few minutes to fill out the form attached to this fact sheet. Please get your comments back to us by March 14, 2003.**

## For your questions about health:

Call Connie Garrett, Florida DOH Health Scientist, or Beth Copeland at **850-245-4299** or **Toll Free 1-877-798-2772**

## For your questions about cleanup:

Call Randall Chaffins U.S.EPA Project Manager, at **404-562-8939** or **Toll Free 1-800-435-9234**

*For information on other sites in Florida DOH has investigated, see our website: [www9.myflorida.com/environment/hsee/Superfund](http://www9.myflorida.com/environment/hsee/Superfund)*