

Clarinda Triangle Area Community Update

October 2005

Pensacola, Escambia County, Florida

Soil Evaluation by Florida DOH

The History of Clarinda Triangle Area (near the Escambia Treating Company Site)

Escambia Treating Company (ETC) operated a wood treating facility in eastern Pensacola from 1942 to 1982. The property is at 3910 North Palafox Highway. ETC treated utility poles and foundation pilings with creosote, pentachlorophenol dissolved in diesel fuel, and possibly chromated copper arsenate (CCA). Between 1982 and 1992, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) tested soil and groundwater. They found creosote and pentachlorophenol. Soil also contained dioxin, common in pentachlorophenol. ETC filed for bankruptcy and abandoned the site in 1991.

The EPA dug up soil from 1991 to 1993 to prevent further groundwater contamination. The excavation also helped determine the amount of solid waste on-site. While EPA was digging, nearby residents complained that strong odors caused eye and skin irritation. EPA temporarily relocated two residents because of health problems.

In 1995, EPA analyzed soil samples from the neighborhoods north and south of ETC. They found dioxin, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), arsenic, and lead. In 1997, EPA decided to relocate approximately 358 families. The relocation was completed in 2003.

In March 2004, EPA collected more soil samples near the ETC site in an area called Clarinda Triangle. These samples had arsenic, dioxins, lead, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). EPA asked the Florida Department of Health (DOH) to evaluate this data for possible public health effects.

***Florida DOH categorizes the Clarinda Triangle surface soil as
“No Apparent Public Health Hazard”.***

Why the Florida Department of Health (DOH) Gets Involved

As part of its job, the Florida Department of Health (DOH) reviews test results of soil, water and air to determine if there are any public health risks near hazardous waste sites. A small team of five is tasked with this effort. We review information gathered by both the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This information usually includes samples of soil, water, or air. The funding for this program is provided by the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR).

What DOH Looks For During the Review

DOH looks at sample results to see what levels of chemicals are at a site in the soil, water or air. From those levels, we determine if a person exposed to a chemical at a site is likely to get sick. The analysis also considers how someone is exposed, how long they are exposed, and to how much chemical they are exposed.

Chemicals must be present in certain amounts to cause illness. To determine when there is enough chemical present that is likely to cause health risks, DOH uses federal ATSDR guidelines.

The ATSDR sets the guidelines at levels many times lower than the amount known to cause illness. The process provides a large margin of safety for the public. These guidelines were used to evaluate the Clarinda Triangle samples.

Health Consultation Report Findings

In its health consultation report, Florida DOH categorizes the Clarinda Triangle surface soil as “No Apparent Public Health Hazard.” Levels of arsenic, dioxins, lead, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) measured in the samples are not at levels likely to cause illness.

Health Consultation Report Recommendations

Although the identified health risks for soil in the Clarinda Triangle area are low, to be on the safe side, residents and workers should avoid hand-to-mouth contact with surface soil. They should also avoid consuming vegetables and fruits grown in contaminated soil, especially root crops. Residents and workers should avoid working in dusty conditions, or should use dust masks if they are unable to avoid dusty conditions.

What DOH Does:

- ✓ *We focus on health.*
- ✓ *We conduct health consultations to answer a specific question about a site*
- ✓ *We conduct public health assessments. These reports look at all the information we can find about a site.*
- ✓ *We inform and educate communities and local doctors about a site.*

For more information: Call DOH toll-free during regular business hours at (877) 798-2772.

Ask to speak to Connie Garrett or Lu Grimm.

The U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) funds 100% of Florida DOH activities at hazardous waste sites, including the cost of this document, approximately 9 cents per copy.

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For more information on DOH activities at hazardous waste sites in Florida, go to:

<http://www.myfloridaeh.com/hsee/SUPERFUND/>