

Tallevast Community Update

April 2006

Former American Beryllium Site Information

Florida DOH and ATSDR Finalize Reports on Beryllium Blood Tests

About the Florida DOH and ATSDR

The Florida Department of Health (DOH) reviews environmental sampling (air, soil, or water) from hazardous waste sites. DOH also sometimes checks blood or urine from people living near a site to see if site chemicals have gotten into their bodies. The Florida DOH is funded by the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to decide what health risk such sites pose for nearby residents.

About the Site

The former American Beryllium site is on 5 acres at 1600 Tallevast Road, southern Manatee County. The plant manufactured ultra-precision machine parts where beryllium-containing metals were milled, lathed, and drilled into various components. Chemicals used and wastes produced at the facility included oils, petroleum-based fuels, solvents, acids, and metals. In 1996, Lockheed Martin Corporation bought the facility. Lockheed closed it later that year.

During the summer of 2004, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Manatee County Health Department (CHD) tested private drinking water wells near the site. Florida DEP also tested groundwater in the Tallevast community. Since then, the Florida DEP and consultants working for Lockheed Martin tested more water and soil near the site.

About the Florida DOH/ATSDR Blood Testing

To answer community health concerns, Florida the DOH checked the blood of former workers, household members of former workers, and community residents to see if they were sensitive to beryllium. The Manatee County Commission gave the CHD funding for testing beginning in December 2004. ATSDR funded more testing through the Sarasota CHD in March 2005, including those living out-of-state. A total of 359 people took part in these two phases of testing.

In April 2005, Florida DOH mailed beryllium sensitivity test results, site information, beryllium toxicity information, and general program information to 38 Bradenton/Sarasota area physicians.

Of 359 people tested, five were sensitive to beryllium. Those five were either former workers or their household members. No community residents were found to be sensitive.

Conclusions of the Blood Testing Reports

In December 2005, Florida DOH and ATSDR reported the results of the first round of results of beryllium sensitivity blood testing. In March 2006, ATSDR reported on follow-up testing of nine people who had initial abnormal, borderline, or un-interpretable results.

Of the 359 participants in the Florida DOH and ATSDR blood testing, two former workers and three household members were beryllium sensitized. All five were referred to a local pulmonologist (lung doctor) for further assessment. No community members tested were sensitive to beryllium.

Blood Testing Recommendations

- Former workers who are not sensitive to beryllium should be re-tested every three to five years.
- Former American Beryllium workers who have not been tested should contact the US Department of Energy (DOE) contractor at the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Technology at 1-866-219-3442.
- A former worker and a community resident who tested abnormal on their first test but later tested normal should be retested this year. They might be at a slightly higher risk of becoming beryllium sensitized.

About US DOE Blood Testing

In separate testing, the federal DOE offers a nationwide program to test former beryllium industry workers. This includes all former American Beryllium workers, regardless of their work dates. It also includes those who have moved away.

As of March 2006, 14 out of 153 (or 9%) of former American Beryllium workers tested in the DOE testing were beryllium sensitive. Some of these workers were also tested by Florida DOH and ATSDR and included in the DOH/ATSDR reports.

Other Florida DOH and ATSDR Work

In August 2004, the Florida DOH collected oranges and corn from Tallevast gardens. The levels of metals found in these fruits and vegetables are not likely to cause illness. In December 2005, the Manatee CHD collected more oranges in December 2005. A summary report is expected later this spring.

In August 2005, Florida DOH and ATSDR finished their health consultation report on indoor air testing of three Tallevast homes and the community center. The levels of chemicals found are not likely to cause illness. The report is available online at www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/community/SUPERFUND/PHA.htm under "American Beryllium, Exposure Investigation Report – December 2005 - Indoor Air."

Florida DOH and ATSDR Plans

The Florida DOH is reviewing soil and drinking water test results to determine if there are any health risks for Tallevast residents. No one is currently using private wells since the county extended municipal water to the community in 2004. At the request of community FOCUS group leaders, Florida DOH waited on additional groundwater and soil test results.

A comprehensive Florida DOH and ATSDR public health assessment report will also include a review of on-site groundwater, soil and address community health concerns. The Florida DOH will continue to keep community members informed.

What the Florida 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 about a site.*
- ✓ *We inform and educate communities and local doctors about a site.*

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

Speak to Susan Skye about indoor air, beryllium sensitivity, or fruit and vegetable testing
Speak to Nancy Malaret about all other site issues.

You may have the reports mailed to you by calling the toll-free number.

Or you may see the reports online at www.myfloridaeh.com/community/SUPERFUND/pha.htm
and scroll down to American Beryllium to read more.

You can also submit comments by mail (see attached form), by phone or via our website.

