



*Mercy General Hospital*  
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September 30, 2008

Dear Mercy General Hospital Neighbors and Staff:

This is an update to our update concerning the Sacred Heart Parish School construction site at 39<sup>th</sup> and H Streets. We have confirmed an in-person joint meeting with representatives from the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) - Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), Mercy General Hospital and Sacred Heart Parish School for Thursday, October 9, at 6:30 p.m. at the Sacred Heart Parish School (SHPS) Gymnasium to review findings and discuss next steps. The SHPS is located at 3933 I Street, Sacramento.

As you know, chlordane was detected in specific soil samples collected last month from the Sacred Heart School construction site. The source of chlordane at the site is from its use as a termiticide. It was approved for use to control termites until 1988, when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) banned its use for any purpose. As a termiticide, chlordane was applied to the soil around the foundations and footings of homes to kill termites that came into contact with it. In addition to chlordane, lead also was detected at an elevated concentration in one of the soil samples collected last month. The source of lead at the site is likely from the degradation of lead-based paint on former structures. The U.S. [Consumer Product Safety Commission](#) banned lead-based paint for residential use in 1978.

Since discovering the elevated levels of chlordane and lead at the site, we have engaged two environmental consulting firms to continue investigating the extent of the problem. The investigation is being conducted under the oversight of the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) - Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC).

Additional characterization sampling was conducted last week that identified elevated levels of lead in surface soil in the northeast corner of the site (near the Bunya Bunya tree). The area of elevated lead coincides with the front of the former home located at the corner of 39<sup>th</sup> and H Streets. In addition, chlordane was detected at concentrations that may pose an unacceptable risk at four discrete locations within the site.

Based on these results, further investigation is necessary to determine the extent of the problem. Step-out sampling for chlordane at the four discrete locations, and additional characterization sampling for lead in the northeast corner of the site, was conducted Thursday, September 18. Additional tests are on-going.

According to DTSC's toxicologist, a health risk exists if there is direct exposure to either chemical at high levels for a long period of time. Because the site is closed with no construction occurring at this time, and based on the recent dust monitoring data that was collected (see attached report), DTSC determined that no person has sustained any prolonged exposure to either chemical; as such, there is no known long-term health concern at this time. In terms of the potential for chlordane and lead to impact the groundwater, both chemicals adsorb quickly into the soil and have not been identified below 2 feet in depth; therefore they do not pose a threat to groundwater quality at this site.

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We are continuing to conduct a careful and deliberate investigation with DTSC oversight that will ensure the data we collect are technically sound and can be used for decision-making purposes. We are looking forward to sharing the results with you and prepare any necessary abatement activities. We appreciate your patience and understanding during this process.

Meanwhile, please feel free to contact me with any other questions or concerns.

Regards,



Jeremy Schrimsher  
Mercy General Hospital



Rev. Msgr. Robert P. Walton  
Pastor, Sacred Heart Parish School

Cc: Neal Hutchison, Project Manager  
Departments of Toxic Substances Control  
Brownfields and Environmental Restoration Program

Attachment: Air Monitoring Data