



Important Information Update

October 19, 2010

On the latest Health Risk Assessment

Based on current operating conditions at the facility, potential health risks were below levels (set by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District) requiring notification for both residents and workers. The BAAQMD requested an updated health risk assessment since they adopted more stringent limits by considering an age sensitivity factor, which was established in January 2010. A health risk analysis looks at a 70-year period, under the worst-case exposure assumptions.

On Chromium 6

Air monitoring tests for chromium 6 (also referred to as hexavalent chromium) were conducted by the US EPA at Stevens Creek Elementary between June and September of 2009. After a thorough analysis of the data, the EPA recently announced the following results:

- Based on the individual monitoring results from the three-month sampling period, the EPA stated that there is "no concern for risk of health problems from short-term exposures to hexavalent chromium."
- The analysis also found that levels of hexavalent chromium are "below levels of concern for long-term exposure."
- The analysis indicates that hexavalent chromium concentrations in the air near the school "do not appear to be influenced by a nearby industrial facility."
- The most recently available chromium emission estimates for Lehigh from EPA's Toxics Release Inventory for 2008 are lower than previously available estimates.

For more information, please reference the EPA's full write-up on their site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/schoolair/StevensCre.html>

On Arsenic

Arsenic occurs naturally in soils in certain areas of California and Northern Santa Clara County. In fact, several studies have shown arsenic levels in local soil samples as high as 9.2 parts per million (ppm) with typical samples in excess of 5 ppm¹. These levels are higher than many screening standards used by state and federal agencies. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and other agencies are well aware of elevated levels of naturally occurring arsenic in the Bay Area in general. It is a common element in the local geology.



A study conducted for the City of San Jose in 1998 entitled "Natural Levels of Nickel, Selenium and Arsenic in the South San Francisco Bay Area" explains this subject in detail and can be found at www.sanjoseca.gov/esd/PDFs/Natural%20Levels%20Report.pdf. Arsenic levels at our site are consistent with *naturally* occurring levels in Santa Clara County.

The Permanente plant included arsenic testing in several stack testing programs beginning in 1996, and including the stack test conducted in 2009. These stack tests have routinely resulted in a "non-detect" for arsenic. The stack tests were conducted by an independent, certified third party under the auspices of BAAQMD and are available for review.

We encourage all inquiring members of the media to contact the BAAQMD, EPA or DTSC for further clarification.

Monta Vista Mobile Air Monitor

A mobile monitoring station is in place today at Monta Vista Park where the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) will perform air quality tests over the next year. Most of the data gathered from the station will be available instantaneously online at the BAAQMD site. In fact, initial results are already being posted.

Instructions for data retrieval: <http://www.baaqmd.gov/>

On the home page, under the "Know" option, select "Real Time Air Quality Data."

Use the "Measurement" field to the left of the page to select various data (for example, PM 2.5 Continuous). Use the tabs to view data by "Daily," "Monthly" and "Annual" layouts.

###

¹Scott, C. Background Metal Concentrations in Soils in Northern Santa Clara County, California. December 1991.
Dragun, J. and Chiasson, A. Elements in North American Soils. Hazardous Materials Control Resources Institute. 1991.
Bradford, G.R., A.C. Chang, A.L. Page, D. Bakhtar, J.A. Frampton, and Wright, H. Background Concentrations of Trace and Major Elements in California Soils. Kearney Foundation of Soil Science, University of California. March 1996.
Anderson, David W. Natural Levels of Nickel, Selenium, and Arsenic in the Southern San Francisco Bay Area. June 1998.