NEW YORK STATE
DEPARTMENT OF

ENVIRONMENTAL
CONSERVATION

Dear Interested Citizen:
This Fact Sheet is to inform you about the ongoing activities associated with the West Side Corporation site.

PUBLIC MEETING
OCTOBER 30, 2007
7 - 9 PM

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FACT SHEET

OCTOBER 2007
Site No. 2-41-026

WEST SIDE CORP. SITE
JAMAICA, QUEENS
QUEENS, NEW YORK

UPCOMING COMMUNITY MEETING
OCTOBER 30, 2007, 7 PM - 9 PM
ST. BENEDICT THE MOOR CHURCH

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) will hold a meeting to update the public on recent cleanup activities the State is involved in near the West Side Corporation inactive hazardous waste site located at 107-10 180th Street in Jamaica, Queens. The project is being managed and funded under NYSDEC's State Superfund program.

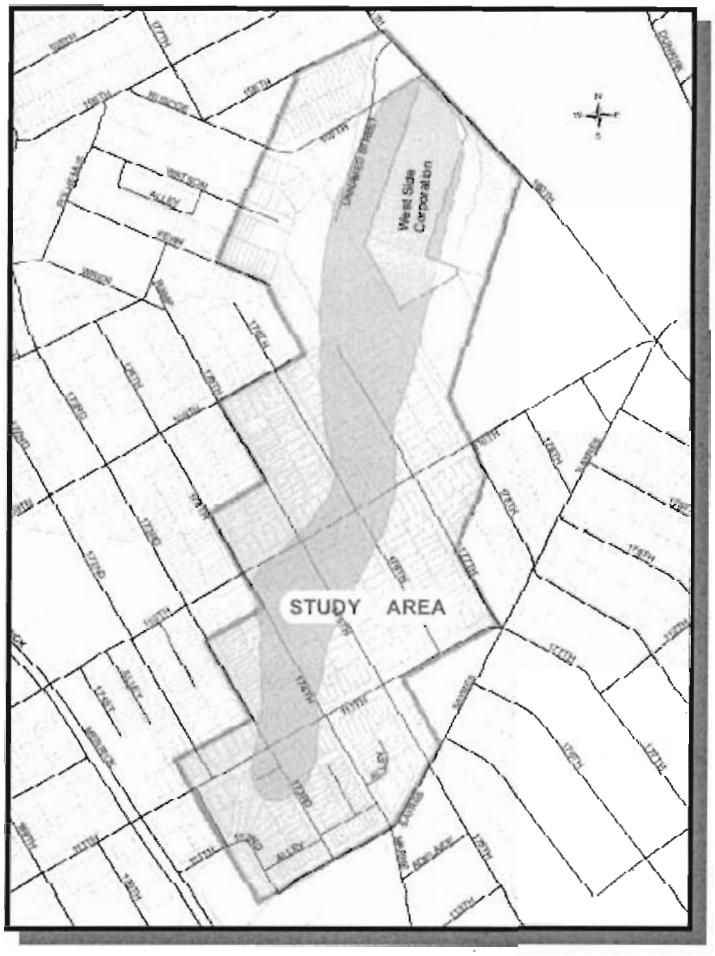
State representatives will give a formal presentation summarizing the results of previous vapor intrusion-related activities and outlining further actions proposed for the off-site residential area. *Vapor intrusion* is a process whereby volatile organic compounds (like PCE) migrate from contaminated soil or groundwater as a vapor and are drawn into overlying buildings through cracks and openings in the foundation and mix with the indoor air. An update on the construction of the groundwater remedy planned for the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) Station 24 will also be provided. Following the presentation, the public will be given an opportunity to ask questions and convey their concerns.

Site Background: The West Side Corporation property was once used as a storage and distribution center for chemicals used in the dry cleaning industry, including tetrachloroethene (PCE). As a result, groundwater and subsurface soils have been contaminated by spills of PCE. Cleanup of highly-contaminated on-site soils was completed in 2006. Cleanup of the groundwater in the vicinity of the site is anticipated to begin in early 2008 with the installation of two groundwater extraction wells. A network of wells is also planned to monitor the anticipated reduction in the off-site plume of dissolved PCE, which is the source of the vapor intrusion concerns.

Over the past two and a half years, the NYSDEC and the NYSDOH have tested the air in dozens of homes near the former West Side facility to monitor the effects of vapor intrusion. Results of these investigations are summarized in several technical reports available for public viewing at the document repository listed on the left side of this page. While significant impacts to indoor air have not generally been observed, the potential for exposure, as evidenced by elevated PCE levels detected beneath many building foundations, does exist. To mitigate these potential exposures to vapors, the State has installed a number of vapor mitigation systems (similar to radon systems) in homes. Until the groundwater extraction system (described above) is up and running and the groundwater is cleaned up, there remains the potential for vapors to migrate into structures overlying the plume.

Recent Plume Delineation Activities: Because contaminated groundwater is the source of the vapors potentially impacting structures within the Study Area, it was necessary to accurately delineate the boundaries of the off-site contaminant plume. Therefore, in March 2007, the NYSDEC installed close to 50 groundwater probes within the Study Area south of the site. Samples of groundwater were collected from each location and sent to a laboratory for chemical analysis. The results indicated that the off-site PCE plume extends to 111th Avenue and 173rd Street (see figure). Data from these investigations has enabled the NYSDEC to more accurately define the impacted areas and better understand the relationship between contaminant levels measured in groundwater and in homes overlying the plume.

Indoor Air Monitoring Program: Last winter, the NYSDEC continued monitoring indoor air in homes within the Study Area to determine the extent to which VOCs may have migrated from the groundwater into overlying buildings. Between December 2006 and April 2007, the NYSDEC sampled over 75 homes. Letters from the NYSDOH were sent to the homeowners with the sample results and recommendations for further actions, if needed. The NYSDEC also sent letters to several homeowners (whose homes had not been sampled) with an offer to either install a mitigation system or to sample their home based on its proximity to other previously tested structures.



After reviewing the results of the March 2007 groundwater sampling, it became apparent that more homes, particularly those situated above the centerline of the plume, needed to be tested. In August 2007, sub-slab vapor samples were collected from two dozen homes. The results indicate that some homes located above the plume as far south as 173rd Street may potentially be impacted by PCE vapors. Based on these results, a handful of homeowners will be offered a mitigation system while some will be resampled this winter to confirm the results.

Groundwater Extraction System - Construction Phase: As part of the BQA Feasibility Study, NYCDEP is planning to restart several groundwater production wells located downgradient of the site to address flooding problems from a rising water table and to potentially provide a future source of potable water. The NYSDEC and NYCDEP have been working together to ensure that the BQA project is compatible with the remediation of the West Side Corporation site. As part of this process, the NYCDEP has designed and will construct the off-site groundwater (Operable Unit No. 2) remedy. Funding for the design and construction of the remedy will come initially from the NYCDEP and then reimbursed by the NYSDEC under a State Assistance Contract (SAC).

NYCDEP has completed remedial design of the OU2 Station 24 remedy and will undertake construction and shakedown of the remedy. The construction contract is expected to be advertised for bid by the NYCDEP in October 2007. Bids are currently scheduled to be opened in November 2007. Award of the contract is expected by the end of January 2008 and construction activities are expected to commence in March 2008. Construction of the remedy is expected to be completed in March 2009. The NYCDEP will be performing construction management services. The NYSDEC will take over site management responsibilities of the treatment system following three successful months of operation by the NYCDEP after start-up.

Next Steps: The vapor intrusion investigation will continue this upcoming winter season and will involve the sampling of approximately 80 structures, many of which have not been tested previously. In October 2007, a contractor hired by the NYSDEC will be in the neighborhood installing mitigation systems. In the coming weeks, the NYSDEC will also be contacting owners of affected properties within the Study Area seeking their cooperation in the air monitoring program. Based on the results of this next phase of structure sampling, the State will again evaluate the information to determine what, if any, additional work and mitigation may be necessary. Based on the findings, the State will propose further actions, as needed, within the Study Area and then hold public meetings to discuss the results. As before, many of the structures will require no further action. However, some property owners will be offered a vapor intrusion mitigation system. Mitigation systems will be installed by the NYSDEC at no cost to the property owner. Other homeowners will be offered an opportunity to have their homes sampled during the next heating season to better understand whether vapor intrusion is occurring at their home.