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# EPA to Continue Working in Hopewell Junction

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## Hopewell Precision Site

Hopewell Junction, East Fishkill, New York

April 2004

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### **Our Goal is to Keep You Informed**

Public participation is essential to the success of the superfund program and EPA. If you have any questions regarding EPA's response activities at the site, please contact either Don Graham or Jim Haklar, EPA On-Scene Coordinators, at (732) 321-4345, or (732) 321-6730 respectively. You can also contact Cecilia Echols, EPA's Community Involvement Coordinator, at (212) 637-3678, or call 1-800-346-5009.

### **Regional Public Liaison**

EPA, Region 2 has designated a Regional Public Liaison for you to call and express your concerns or complaints about the Superfund program. Please call (888) 283-7626.

### **Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)**

A representative of ATSDR is available to answer health-related questions. Please contact LTJG Jonathan Blonk, ATSDR Associate Regional Representative, at (212) 637-4304.

For information on the Superfund process, please visit EPA's website at:

**[www.epa.gov/superfund](http://www.epa.gov/superfund)**

Information on the various tools and resources available to community groups, as well as fact sheets about other sites, can be found there.

For information on safe drinking water levels and the chemicals which EPA limits in drinking water, please visit:

**[www.epa.gov/OGWDW/mcl.html](http://www.epa.gov/OGWDW/mcl.html)**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is pleased to announce that the Agency's involvement will continue at the Hopewell Precision Site, beyond the one-year anniversary date of the start of response activities. Initially, there was concern within the community that EPA would leave after the one-year time period. However, we have obtained authorization and funding to continue our involvement at the Site.

**EPA plans to hold a Public Forum to update the community on the status of the activities that have been conducted, and to provide information on the process of including the Hopewell Precision Site on the National Priorities List. The Public Forum will be held from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm on Wednesday, May 5, 2004, at the Gayhead Elementary School located on Entry Road in Hopewell Junction.**

A brief summary of EPA's activities at the Site, along with a descriptions of future activities, is provided below.

### **Sampling of Private Wells and Installation of Carbon Filtration Systems**

Since February 2003, EPA has sampled the private (drinking water) wells of 341 properties (mostly residences) located in the vicinity of the site. The samples were analyzed for volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which are chemicals that can readily evaporate into the air. Based on the laboratory results, there are 37 properties with private wells contaminated with trichloroethylene (also known as TCE) above the federal safe drinking water level of 5 parts per billion (this safe drinking water level is also called the Maximum Contaminant Level, or "MCL"). While other volatile organic compounds were periodically found in the groundwater, TCE was the only chemical found to exceed its federal MCL. EPA installed whole-house carbon filtration systems at the 37 properties described above to remove the contamination from the well water. Sampling of the filtration systems reveals that they are effectively removing TCE from the drinking water.

EPA's sampling also revealed 13 residences where the concentration of 1,1,1-trichloroethane exceeded the state MCL of 5 ppb, yet did not exceed the federal MCL of 200 ppb. In response to this situation, the N.Y.S. Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) installed whole-house carbon filtration systems at these residences.

## **Indoor Air Sampling**

In April and November of 2003, EPA collected indoor air samples from a number of homes in the vicinity of the Hopewell Precision Site. This sampling was performed in order to evaluate whether the VOCs which were being found in the groundwater were also present in the air. EPA collected air samples from various locations in homes such as the basement, the first floor, and (in some instances) from underneath the house slab (i.e., subslab sampling).

The results of this indoor air sampling revealed that VOCs were found in the air at most of the homes which were sampled. However, since residents typically have household chemicals in their homes, it was difficult for EPA to determine where the VOCs were coming from; i.e., whether the vapors were from household chemicals, or whether vapors from the contaminated groundwater were finding their way into the home (also called “vapor intrusion”).

To help in determining whether vapor intrusion could be a problem at the Site, EPA (in January and February of this year) collected indoor air samples from 36 residences using a mobile laboratory called a trace atmospheric gas analyzer (TAGA). The advantage of using the TAGA laboratory was that the source of any indoor air contaminants could be quickly located. Samples of both the indoor air and soil gas underneath the building slab were then collected and sent to a laboratory for analysis (EPA is expecting the final results later this spring).

EPA has evaluated the indoor air and subslab sampling effort with the N.Y.S. Department of Health (NYSDOH), the NYSDEC and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). Based on this evaluation, EPA has determined that there are residences with indoor air concentrations of TCE at levels which require mitigation. As described below, EPA plans on installing vapor mitigation systems in the affected homes later this spring.

## **What's Next**

There are a number of ongoing and planned activities for the Site. We are continuing to sample the 37 carbon filtration systems on a quarterly basis to ensure that they are working properly. Furthermore, the NYSDEC is continuing to sample the 13 homes on a

quarterly basis where they installed carbon filtration systems. EPA will continue to sample impacted and potentially impacted private wells, in order to evaluate how the contaminated groundwater is moving and to determine whether additional homes are at risk of being impacted.

EPA will address the vapor intrusion problem through the installation of vapor mitigation systems. These systems are very similar to equipment used to reduce the level of radon in homes, and have been successfully used on other sites to address vapor intrusion. Installation of the vapor mitigation systems will begin in May, and at that time we will also sample additional homes in the vicinity of the contaminated groundwater to determine if a vapor intrusion problem exists in other residences.

## **The National Priorities List (NPL)**

The NPL is a published list of hazardous waste sites in the country that are eligible for extensive, long-term cleanup action under the Superfund program. EPA is continuing to evaluate the eligibility of the site for the NPL.



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Region 2

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