

Fact Sheet, March 2010



Department of
Toxic Substances
Control

*Our mission is
to provide the
highest level of
safety, and to
protect public
health and the
environment
from toxic
harm.*



State of California



California
Environmental
Protection Agency

Environmental Update on Dr. Augustine Ramirez Intermediate School

Si prefiere hablar con alguien en español acerca de ésta información, favor de llamar a Jeanne Garcia, Departamento de Control de Substancias Tóxicas. El número de teléfono es (818) 717-6573.

The Corona-Norco Unified School District is planning a construction project for the proposed Dr. Augustine Ramirez Intermediate School (Site) located at 6851 Harrison Avenue, Eastvale Area, Unincorporated Riverside County, California. The Site is just south of the Rosa Parks Elementary School. The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has been overseeing the environmental investigation at the Site to ensure that the location will be safe for school occupants. School construction is anticipated to start in April 2010 and be completed in December 2011.

In 2005, methane in soil gas was detected at the Site above levels which require action by DTSC. In 2006, DTSC approved a Removal Action Workplan (RAW) to install a methane mitigation system beneath proposed school buildings. Due to delays in school construction, a follow up soil gas survey was conducted in 2009 to determine current methane levels. **Based on the results of current levels of methane, a methane mitigation system at the proposed school site is no longer needed.**

Site Background

The proposed Site was originally approximately 28 acres, and in December 2009, the Site property size was reduced to 25.35 acres. The property was vacant land from 1902 until 1962; and in 1962, was developed for agricultural use. From 1969 to 2004, the property was part of the Vander Meer dairy. The Site has been vacant since 2005. During environmental investigations, methane was found in soil gas beneath the ground surface in amounts that exceed levels acceptable by DTSC for a school site. Soil gas is the air space between soil particles beneath the ground surface. The methane is believed to have been generated from buried dairy waste, including cow manure.

While exposure to methane does not pose a direct health risk to children or staff, it is a potential explosive hazard at elevated concentrations within enclosed structures. Methane can accumulate in enclosed spaces and, if collected in sufficient concentration over time under building slabs or in utility lines, it may become an explosive hazard.

Environmental Investigations

During environmental studies conducted in 2005, elevated methane concentrations were identified in soil gas samples collected from areas of the Site including beneath the proposed building footprints. A workplan (or RAW) to install a sub-slab methane mitigation system to cleanup methane and prevent methane hazards was approved by the DTSC in 2006.

Due to delays in the school construction schedule, a follow up methane soil gas survey was performed in November 2009 and December 2009 to collect current information on methane concentrations and distributions.

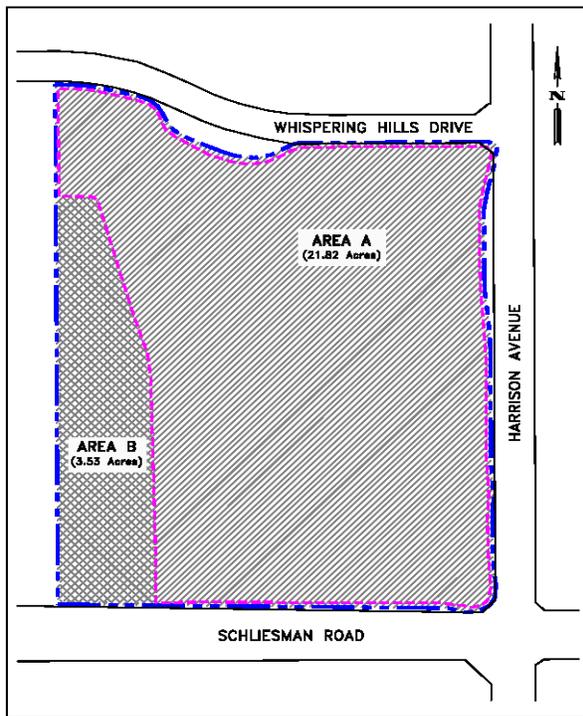


During the most recent environmental investigation, methane was not detected above levels acceptable by DTSC in the area of the proposed school building or paved areas (Area A). In the southwestern portion of the Site beneath the proposed track and field (Area B), concentrations of methane significantly declined compared to the 2005 levels but remain above DTSC acceptable levels.

Based on the findings presented in the Supplemental Site Investigation (SSI) Addendum Report, DTSC rescinded the requirements of the approved RAW and sub-slab methane mitigation system. DTSC determined that no further action is necessary for Area A (21.82 acres of the 25.35-acre site) and further methane monitoring is required at Area B (the remaining 3.53 acres). DTSC restricts the construction of buildings, unventilated utility vaults, or other features which might promote the accumulation of methane in Area B.

Next Steps

Further monitoring for methane concentrations will be conducted on a quarterly basis in Area B until methane concentrations decrease below levels acceptable to DTSC. The methane monitoring is expected to begin in late March 2010.



Site map showing Area A and Area B

Who to Contact for Information

If you have any questions about the project or cleanup activities, please contact:

Christine Chiu, DTSC Project Manager
(714) 484-5340 or cchiu@dtsc.ca.gov

Jeanne Matsumoto, DTSC Public Participation
(714) 484-5338 or jmatsumo@dtsc.ca.gov

Media Inquiries:

Sandra Friedman, DTSC Public Information Officer
(714) 484-5383 or sfriedma@dtsc.ca.gov

Notice to Hearing-Impaired Individuals

You can obtain additional information about the Site by using the California State Relay Service at 1 (888) 877-5378 (TDD). Ask them to contact Jeanne Matsumoto regarding the Dr. Augustine Ramirez Intermediate School project.

Where to Find Site Documents

The SSI Addendum Report and other related documents regarding the Site are available for review at the following locations:

Corona-Norco Unified School District

2820 Clark Avenue
Norco, CA 92860-1903
Contact: Facilities Division
Phone: (909) 736-5045

Norco Library

3954 Old Hamner Road
Norco, CA 92860
(951) 735-5329

Department of Toxic Substances Control

Regional Records Office
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, CA 90630
Contact: Julie Johnson, (714) 484-5337
Hours: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday – Friday

To view the electronic version of the SSI Addendum Report and other related Site documents, please visit DTSC's EnviroStor website: <http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public>

Enter "Corona" as the "City" and click on "Get Report." Then click on "Report" to the left of "Augustine Ramirez Intermediate School" entry.

DTSC is part of the California Environmental Protection Agency. DTSC oversees soil and groundwater investigations at proposed new or expanding school sites, and evaluates property for potential hazardous materials or contamination that may pose a risk to school children, the staff or faculty.