

Fact Sheet
October 2003

George W. Battles Elementary School Santa Maria, California



PLEASE COMMENT ON PLAN TO CLEANUP SCHOOL SITE

DTSC is one of six Boards and Departments within the California Environmental Protection Agency. The Department's mission is to restore, protect and enhance the environment, to ensure public health, environmental quality and economic vitality, by regulating hazardous waste, conducting and overseeing cleanups, and developing and promoting pollution prevention.

State of California



California
Environmental
Protection Agency



As you may know from the survey letter distributed in August 2003, low levels of a pesticide were found in the soil in two areas at George W. Battles Elementary School. You are invited to review and comment on a Draft Removal Action Workplan (site cleanup plan) for this school site. The school is located at 605 E. Battles Road in Santa Maria, California, 93454.

THIS FACT SHEET TELLS YOU

- What we found
- How it got there
- That it is not a risk to public health
- Why and how we plan to clean it up
- How you can tell us what you think
- Who to contact for more information

The site cleanup will be conducted by the Santa Maria-Bonita School District (SMBSD) under the oversight of our state agency, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). SMBSD is responsible for the site cleanup. Our agency makes sure the cleanup work meets state and federal standards that protect the public's health and the environment. Under the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a draft Notice of Exemption was prepared for this project. It has been determined that the proposed cleanup will not have a significant negative effect on the environment.

SITE INVESTIGATIONS

The SMBSD conducted a Preliminary Environmental Assessment (initial environmental investigation) and Supplemental Site Investigation at the 11.5-acre site under DTSC oversight. The focus of the investigation was to determine if there were any impacts from the former oil well and the Santa Maria Oil Field activities on the site. A comprehensive soil and soil gas investigation for oil production related compounds (such as volatile organic compounds, semi volatile organic compounds, hydrogen sulfide, methane, and metals) was conducted on the site. In addition, due to the agricultural history of the site, soil sampling was conducted for pesticides.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

October 14 - November 13,
2003

We invite you to provide us with your comments and questions about the soil removal plan for the George W. Battles Elementary School. The purpose of the public comment period is to give the community an opportunity to submit comments on the Removal Action Plan. This fact sheet will provide you with information on who to write your comments to, and where to find the technical reports that provide detailed environmental information.

During the extensive investigation soil and/or soil gas was tested at more than 50 locations on the Battles campus. SMBSD submitted the final report to DTSC in September 2003. Low levels of the pesticide dieldrin were detected in two areas on the school's property. Although low, these levels of dieldrin were above those allowed for school sites by DTSC. The two areas of soil where dieldrin was detected are located in a small area of the soccer field on the playground in back of the school, and an area in front of the school between a classroom building and the sidewalk.

As a result of the site investigation findings, a site cleanup known as a removal action is being proposed to remove and eliminate the potential long term health risk posed by the pesticide dieldrin in the soil. Once the contaminated soil is removed, the potential risk will be reduced to levels that are safe for students and faculty. DTSC will oversee the removal action and will ensure that the removal is performed in a manner that does not result in any harm to people or the environment.

NOT A RISK TO PUBLIC

The good news is that the contaminated soil is not an immediate risk to the students or people who work there, or to the people who live nearby. This is because the highest levels of dieldrin were found at a soil depth of 2 feet. The exposure potential to students and teachers is minimal because the soil with the highest levels of dieldrin is covered by 2 feet of soil and grass and is limited to two small areas of the whole campus. The contamination is stable and will not spread to other areas.

HOW THE CHEMICALS GOT THERE WHY WE NEED A CLEANUP

The pesticides came from over 47 years of agricultural practices at the site before the school was built. From the 1950s until 1970, dieldrin was a pesticide commonly used on crops to kill insects. Right now, the affected soil is covered (the highest levels of dieldrin were found 2 feet beneath the soil's surface) and the public is not exposed. But in the future, if the school district decides to expand or build on the site, the pesticide needs to be removed to make

sure students and faculty are not exposed to it.

CLEANUP OPTIONS

Several cleanup options were evaluated. Protection of human health and the environment was the most important factor considered. The following options were reviewed:

Option 1 – No Action

Option 2 – Onsite Containment (Capping)

Option 3 – Excavation and Disposal (Preferred Option)

Any cleanup plan must protect public health and the environment, have a reasonable cost, and be shared with the community. We think the best plan that meets these goals is Option 3, Excavation and Disposal. The contaminated soil can be removed using standard earth-moving equipment and transported for disposal. The preferred cleanup option was selected because it was determined to be effective, feasible, and permanent, and to have a reasonable cost.

HOW WE PLAN TO CLEAN IT UP

The proposed Removal Action Workplan is to remove the contaminated soil by excavating to a depth of about 3 feet and transporting the soil to a state approved disposal facility. Approximately 3,050 cubic yards of material will be removed in 170 truckloads. Once the soil is removed, clean soil will be used to fill the holes and cover the areas.

SMBSD will conduct the soil removal work on weekends, when school is not in session, between the hours of 7 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. The cleanup will last about four weeks (the work is tentatively scheduled for four weekends during December). The removal action will include digging out the soil, transporting it, follow-up confirmation soil sampling and analysis, and site restoration.

OTHER SITE CLEANUP ACTIONS

Prior to the DTSC investigation, extensive work was done in 1999 by SMBSD in response to community concerns raised about the school's indoor air quality and a former oil production waste sump (pit). As an additional measure, SMBSD plans to conduct an excavation of a

third small area (on the northwest end of the soccer field) at the same time the soil containing pesticides is removed. This area contains soils with some low levels of petroleum hydrocarbons that do not present a health risk. It is believed that the source of these petroleum hydrocarbons is soil that was brought onto the site in the mid-1980s.

DEALING WITH SAFETY AND DUST DURING CLEANUP

If the cleanup plan is approved as written, some noise from the earth-moving equipment can be expected during the removal. We will try to keep this distraction to a minimum. No traffic delays are expected while the trucks are driving to and from the site. The trucks will generally exit on Battles Road and travel on main streets to the 101 freeway. Here are some of the actions SMBSD will take to ensure safety on the site and minimize the impact of dust during the cleanup action:

- The removal site areas will be fenced and secured from the public.
- Plastic sheets will be used to cover the fences and to cover the removal site areas during the week and other non-work hours.
- All vehicles will maintain slow speeds while on the site.
- Work areas will be sprayed or misted with clean water to prevent dust.
- Water mist will be sprayed on soil loaded into the transport trucks.
- Trucks will be covered with a tarp as they leave the site to prevent soil from falling off.
- The air will be monitored onsite to make sure the amount of dust stays at a safe level.

YOUR CHANCE TO MAKE COMMENTS

You have the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Removal Action Workplan. The Public Comment Period will be from October 14, 2003, to November 13, 2003. During this time you can review the Workplan and send us your questions and thoughts about the proposed cleanup option.

Your comments must be postmarked no later than November 13, 2003. Send comments to: Laura Zaremba, DTSC Project Manager, (818) 551-2183, 1011 N. Grandview Ave., Glendale, CA 91201.

WHERE TO FIND SITE DOCUMENTS (TECHNICAL REPORTS)

The proposed cleanup plan is described in detail in the *Draft Removal Action Workplan* for George W. Battles Elementary School. This document also describes how we looked at the possible health risks. All documents about this site are available for your review at the following locations:

Santa Maria Public Library

420 S. Broadway, Santa Maria, CA 93454

Phone: (805) 925-0994

Hours: Monday–Thursday 10:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m.

Fridays, Saturdays 10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.

Santa Maria-Bonita School District Souza Education Center

708 South Miller Street, Santa Maria, CA 93454

Contact: Pat Bringe Phone: (805) 361-8131

Hours: Monday–Friday 8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Battles Elementary School

Administration Office

605 E. Battles Road, Santa Maria, CA 93454

Phone: (805) 361-6880

Hours: Monday–Friday 8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Department of Toxic Substances Control Regional Records Office

1011 N. Grandview Avenue

Glendale, CA 91201

Contact: Jone Barrio Phone: (818) 551-2886

Hours: Monday–Friday 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

WHO TO CALL FOR INFORMATION

If you have any questions about the cleanup project or cleanup activities, please call the following persons at our agency: Ms. Treva Miller, Public Participation Specialist, at (818) 551-2846; or Ms. Laura Zaremba, DTSC Project Manager, at (818) 551-2183.

Si desea información en español, comuníquese con: Sr. Eloy Florez, Especialista en Participación Pública del DTSC, al (818) 551-2875. For media inquiries, please contact Jeanne Garcia, Public

Information Officer at (818) 551-2176. For more information about the DTSC, please visit our website at www.dtsc.ca.gov.

If you have any questions about the cleanup work schedule or onsite cleanup activities, please call Mr. Ed Fassiotto, SMBSD Administrator of Maintenance & Operations, at (805) 361-8255.

NOTICE TO HEARING IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS

TDD users can use the California Relay Service at (1-888-877-5378) to reach DTSC Public Participation Specialist, Treva Miller, at (818) 551-2846.

GEORGE W. BATTLES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SITE PLAN

