



# Palos Verdes Landfill Five-Year Review Update

FACT SHEET #10, May 2005

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is the lead agency with oversight responsibilities for the Palos Verdes Landfill (PVLV). DTSC is currently completing a formal five-year review of the environmental systems in place at the landfill. The review is taking place to ensure the systems currently in place continue to be effective in protecting human health and the environment, as outlined in the 1995 Remedial Action Plan (RAP).

This review, started in March 2004, takes place five years after the date DTSC certified the site, and is the first in a series of reviews that will be conducted every five years.

This fact sheet describes the review process, the types of remedial and control systems in use, history of the landfill, and lets you know how you can get involved in an upcoming open house and community meeting.

## Six Steps to the Five-Year review process

The review process consists of six steps. Some of the review steps have already been completed and we are presently completing Step 5 which involves community interviews and a questionnaire. The six steps undertaken for the five-year review are outlined on the following page.

### COMMUNITY TOWN HALL OPEN HOUSE AND MEETING

DTSC will host an open house and community meeting to explain this project and answer your questions. This is your opportunity to talk to DTSC staff about the operation at the landfill, environmental issues and the ongoing five-year review. Please note that this open house and meeting does not cover development issues related to the proposed golf course project.

**Meeting Date:** Wednesday, June 8, 2005

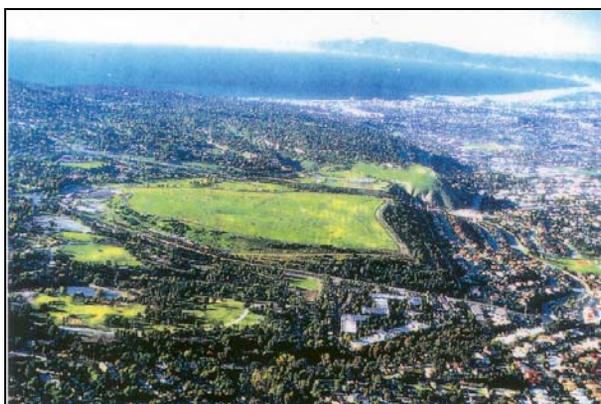
Open House: 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Public Meeting: 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

**Location:** South Coast Botanic Garden, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274 (Ample parking is available)

*For information on meeting room accessibility and to request reasonable accommodations, please contact Tim Chauvel at (714) 484-5487 at least 48 hrs prior to the meeting.*





Aerial view of the Palos Verdes Landfill

### **Step 1: Community involvement and notification**

DTSC will publish a public notice at the end of the five year review period. In addition, this fact sheet and attached questionnaire will be mailed to local residents living near the landfill. Further, throughout the review period, DTSC will present updates of the review at local Community Advisory Board (CAB) public meetings. For further information, contact Tim Chauvel at (714) 484-5487.

### **Step 2: Document review**

All relevant documents and data will be reviewed by DTSC to assess the performance of the environmental systems at the landfill.

### **Step 3: Data review and analysis**

A thorough review of the sampling and analysis plans and results from monitoring activities, operation and maintenance reports will be conducted by DTSC.

### **Step 4: Site inspections**

A site inspection was conducted in 2004 to gather information about the site's current status and to visually confirm and document the conditions of the remedy, the site, and surrounding area.

### **Step 5: Interviews**

Interviews with landfill operations staff, regulatory agencies, and the public will be completed by June 2005 to provide additional information about the site's status.

### **Step 6: Assess site remedy**

The purpose of the five-year review is to determine whether the remedy at the site continues to be protective of human health and the environment. This will be determined by answering the following three questions:

1. Is the remedy functioning as intended?
2. Are the exposure assumptions, toxicity data, cleanup levels, and remedial action objectives still valid?
3. Has any other information come to light that could call into question the protectiveness of the remedy?

### **Description of the landfill**

The Palos Verdes Landfill is 291 acres in size and is located in the city of Rolling Hills Estates and partially in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County. It has been closed since 1980. It is now capped with a soil cover planted with grass, trees, and shrubbery. Parts of it are used as a park and a botanic garden.

The largest portion of the landfill, called the "main site," is in the center and is between Hawthorne and Crenshaw Boulevards. This area has horse stables and equestrian trails. In addition, the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (Sanitation Districts) operate a recycle center on Crenshaw Blvd. The eastern portion is now the site of the South Coast Botanic Garden. The western portion is now the site of Ernie Howlett Park.

### **Operations at the landfill**

The Sanitation Districts are responsible for operating and maintaining the environmental control systems at the landfill. With DTSC's oversight, they operate various systems to prevent any hazardous waste from reaching the environment. The County of Los Angeles, the City of Rolling Hills Estates and the Sanitation Districts each own one or more of the six parcels that make up the landfill property. Contact information for these agencies is listed at the end of this fact sheet.

### **History of the landfill**

The landfill began operation in 1952 by BKK as a 15-acre site at what is now the South Coast Botanic Garden.

The Sanitation Districts took over the site from BKK in 1957 and expanded the landfill to its current boundaries, finally closing it in 1980.

Site records indicate that during operations, the landfill received approximately 23.6 million tons of solid and liquid waste. The eastern and western portions of the site (now the Botanic Garden and Ernie Howlett Park) received only non-hazardous waste. At the main site in the center area, some of the waste was hazardous. This hazardous waste included chemicals such as solvents, acids, alkalines, and pesticides, and metals such as lead. Most of this hazardous waste came from local refineries, crude oil unloading terminals, and oil fields.

Between 1990 and 1995, DTSC and the Sanitation Districts engaged in a comprehensive study to identify the nature and extent of contamination from the site and any associated health risks. The study found that by operating the remedial system identified below, health risks were found to be below State of California levels of concern. Although there was no health risk associated with low levels of contamination found in the otherwise unusable groundwater near the site, the Sanitation Districts enhanced the groundwater extraction system by installing additional groundwater extraction wells to control and remove contaminated groundwater.

### **An overview of the five-year review**

The Palos Verdes Landfill has systems in place to keep gas and hazardous chemicals from escaping into the environment. The following information gives an overview of the systems that will be reviewed under the five-year review which will include looking at the soil cover, gas collection system, groundwater extraction and treatment system, an underground groundwater barrier, and landscaping features to prevent surface water runoff from washing away the landfill cover.

### **Above ground pipe systems to collect landfill gas**

The natural breakdown of material in a landfill creates a gas made up mostly of carbon dioxide, methane, and some volatile organic compounds (VOCs). VOCs can be harmful if they get into the air where people and animals might breathe them, and methane can cause explosions if it is allowed to build up in closed spaces. The Sanitation

Districts use a gas collection system at the landfill to capture this gas and burn it as fuel in their Gas-to-Energy facility.

The gas is pulled into pipes that lie in the landfill waste and around the perimeter of the landfill. From these pipes the gas is drawn through a vacuum into a collection system. The Sanitation Districts then send the collected gas to their Gas-to-Energy plant where it is cleanly burned to produce electrical power.

To prevent gas from migrating offsite from the landfill, there are 256 gas monitoring probes around the perimeter of the landfill. These probes are tested monthly. Also, technicians take air samples along the surface of the landfill on a quarterly basis, in accordance with Rule 1150.1 of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The SCAQMD is the air pollution control agency for Los Angeles County.

### **Grading, storm drains, and berms to prevent water runoff**

The Sanitation Districts use several methods to prevent rain and water runoff damage. To keep water from running onto the site from other areas, the landfill cover is graded (sloped) away from the landfill. Berms and storm drains on the site also keep water away. The runoff is diverted into storm drains onsite. Additionally, in order to prevent contaminated water from entering the storm drains, a new dry weather diversion system is presently being installed. This system will divert any spills from the remedial system onsite to the sanitary sewer instead of allowing it to enter the storm drains.

### **Soil erosion control**

Erosion of the soil cover on the landfill can expose the buried waste. To prevent this, the Palos Verdes Landfill cover is planted with grass, trees, shrubs, and various ground cover plants. Stopping erosion is also important to protect surface water quality because it reduces the amount of sediment in surface water runoff.

### **Study of possible risks to human health and the environment**

In 1995 the Sanitation Districts, under DTSC oversight, performed a study on the possible risks to people's health from the hazardous materials in the landfill.

The results of this study, called a Health Risk Assessment, showed that the Palos Verdes Landfill did not pose a significant health risk to workers or people in the area – as long as the gas collection systems and other safety systems are operated and maintained.

### **DTSC oversight**

In 1998, the Sanitation Districts entered into an enforceable agreement with DTSC to operate and maintain the remedial systems. The Sanitation Districts provide summary reports to DTSC every three months describing activities at the site, and show the results of groundwater monitoring for that quarter.

Future five-year reviews are another way our agency can continue to monitor the effectiveness of the containment systems.

### **Location for more information**

Reports, studies, and other project documents related to the Palos Verdes Landfill are available at the following three locations:

- Peninsula Center Library  
650 Deep Valley Drive  
Rolling Hills Estates, CA  
Phone: (310) 377-9584
- Torrance Civic Center Library (also known as the Katy Geissert Library)  
3301 Torrance Boulevard  
Torrance, CA  
Phone: (310) 618-5959
- Department of Toxic Substances Control  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, CA

To review information at DTSC, please call Julie Johnson, File Room Coordinator, at (714) 484-5337, or ext 5336, or fax (714) 484-5318 for an appointment.

## **Agency contacts**

### **Department of Toxic Substances Control**

Daniel Zogaib, Project Manager  
Phone: (714) 484-5483  
dzogaib@dtsc.ca.gov

Tim Chauvel, Public Participation Specialist  
Phone: (714) 484-5487  
tchauvel@dtsc.ca.gov

Jeanne Garcia, Public Information Officer  
(Media inquiries only)  
Phone: (818) 551-2176  
Jgarcia1@dtsc.ca.gov

For more information about our agency, please visit our website at [www.dtsc.ca.gov](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov)

### **Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County**

David Rothbart, Project Coordinator  
Phone: (562) 699-7411  
drothbart@lacsdc.org  
<http://www.lacsdc.org>

### **Community interview questionnaire**

We are interested in what you think. Please complete the attached questionnaire and return via mail to the address below no later than Monday, June 20, 2005.

Mail questionnaire to:

Tim Chauvel, Public Participation Specialist  
Department of Toxic Substances Control  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, CA 90630

### **NOTICE TO THE HEARING IMPAIRED**

You can obtain additional information on the Palos Verdes Landfill by using the California State Relay Service at 1-888-877-5378 (TDD). Ask them to contact Tim Chauvel, Public Participation Specialist at (714) 484-5487.

PALOS VERDES LANDFILL FIVE-YEAR REVIEW

**COMMUNITY INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE**

Please complete the following questionnaire and return via mail **no later than Monday, June 20, 2005**, or hand deliver at the June 8th public meeting to:

Tim Chauvel, Public Participation Specialist  
Department of Toxic Substances Control  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, CA 90630

1) Name ( <i>Last, First, M.I.</i> ):	Title:	Mr. <input type="checkbox"/>	Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>	Ms. <input type="checkbox"/>
2) Address: Number of years at the above address:				
3) Do you work in the vicinity of Palos Verdes Landfill (PVLf)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
If yes, please enter work address:				
Please enter the number of years you have worked at this address?				
4) Are you affiliated with any local community organizations or agencies? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
If yes, what are your organization's/local government's responsibilities relative to the PVLf?				
5) What is your overall impression of the operations at the PVLf?				
6) Have you ever been on the PVLf site? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
If yes, please describe:?				
7) What effects have PVLf operations had on the surrounding community?				

## PALOS VERDES LANDFILL FIVE-YEAR REVIEW

# COMMUNITY INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

8) Are you aware of any community concerns regarding the site or its operations and administration? If so, please give details.

9) Are you aware of any events, incidents, or activities at the site such as vandalism, trespassing, or emergency response from local authorities? If so, please give details.

10) Do you feel well informed about the site's activities and progress?

11) Are you aware of any significant changes in the land use around the landfill since 1995?

12) Do you have any comments, suggestions, or recommendations regarding the site's management or operations?