

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



Results of soil gas and indoor air sampling done near the Univar Jillson Street facility



Photo of the facility as it looks today.

This is the fourth in a series of fact sheets about the Univar USA Inc. Jillson Street facility. As you may be aware, last September we took indoor and outdoor air samples at 11 homes. The purpose of this sampling was to find out if chemical vapors from the Univar site are moving offsite into people's homes and yards. The main chemicals of concern are solvents such as tetrachloroethene (PCE), trichloroethene (TCE), and dichloroethene (DCE). This fact sheet gives the results of those tests, as well as a description of the history and future plans for the investigation.

Our agency is the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). Our mission is to protect human health and the environment by overseeing the investigation and cleanup of the site.

The indoor air tests found some chemical vapors, at fairly low levels that don't present an immediate health risk. These chemical vapors are similar to what are in the outdoor air in many areas of Los Angeles. Until we do more tests, we won't know if the vapors came from the Univar site or from other sources.

Public Meeting

March 5, 2005 at 11:00 a.m.

City of Commerce
Council Chambers
5655 Jillson Street
Commerce, CA 90040

At this meeting, project information will be presented, sampling investigations will be discussed, and our staff will be available for you to ask questions or make comments.

Meeting Accessibility

For information on accessibility and to request reasonable accommodations, please contact Leticia Hernandez at (714) 484-5488 at least one week before the meeting.

The Univar site is about 7 acres in size, in a mixed industrial, commercial, and residential area of Commerce. From the mid-1950s until 2002 the facility was used for the storage and distribution of a wide variety of chemicals. It formerly contained 10 underground storage tanks that were removed in 1985. After the tanks were

removed, further investigations found more contamination in the former underground storage tank area.

Univar entered into a legal agreement with us in February 2002 to investigate and clean up the site and any contamination that may have moved offsite into the community. This investigation has been conducted by Univar, with our agency's oversight since 1998 and with the closure of the hazardous waste unit.

Indoor sampling was done at residences in September 2004

The indoor air sampling was done as a one-time event by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and our agency for screening-level purposes rather than a complete site evaluation. The residents were interviewed before the field work. The residents were given instructions not to use strong chemicals in their homes for at least three days. The indoor air sampling was done in September 2004 at 11 residences located near the western boundary of the facility. These residences were chosen because of the high levels of PCE found in shallow soil gas samples close to the homes. The objective of this sampling was to see if chemicals were found in indoor air at these homes.

The sample results found volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the homes. However, the levels are too low to cause short-term health effects. Some of these VOCs were also found in the outdoor air. The table below shows the range of sampling results.

Compound	Indoor Results ug/m ³ *		Outdoor Results ug/m ³	
	Lowest	Highest	Lowest	Highest
PCE	1.02	12.00	0.88	1.40
TCE	0.32	7.50	0.25	3.20
Chloroform	0.30	1.70	0.18	0.32
Cis-1,2-DCE	ND*	0.37	ND*	ND*
1,1-DCE	ND*	1.90	ND*	ND*

* ND = non detect

*Ug/m3= micrograms per cubic meter

Our health concerns are for potential long-term affects of the VOCs. In cases of potential

residential exposure, we are very conservative in managing public health risks. There are many potential sources of VOCs including the underground vapor plume associated with the nearby Univar facility. These chemicals could have come from household cleaners, hobby paints and glues, clothes from some dry cleaners, outdoor air, and other possible sources. Our goal is to manage the risk to residences from the exposure of vapors originating from the VOC contaminants released from the facility that are found in the subsurface soil.

Therefore, we need to find out if chemical vapors from the facility could be posing a risk to these homes and, if so, to clean them up. To do this we have to conduct more tests and get more information. These tests may include taking more indoor air samples, taking air samples from the crawl spaces below the buildings, and sampling the soil gas within the yards. We are working with Univar to decide when to do the new sampling.

Earlier tests found chemicals in the groundwater and soil at the facility

Other sampling done at the facility between 2001 and 2002 found a plume of chemical contamination in the groundwater deep below the site. There is no indication that drinking water wells are affected. We also found chemical vapors in the soils in the western part of the property. Since there is no immediate threat, our agency will continue to investigate the area and include groundwater in its final plans for cleanup.

The highest levels of VOCs in soil gas are in the northwest corner of the site. To see if this contamination had spread beyond the site boundaries, we did off-site testing in 2004. Sampling results showed that soil gas vapors have moved off-site under the nearby residential area west of the facility. As a result, Univar is required to clean up the vapors from the residential areas and to prevent further movement of the chemicals into the surrounding areas.

Cleanup will begin using soil vapor extraction. This cleanup will be done with a soil vapor extraction treatment (SVET) system. This system

pulls vapors from the soil using a vacuum, puts them through an activated carbon filter, and discharges the cleaned air. Construction has begun and is planned to be finished by the end of February 2005. Univar has obtained a South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) permit for this treatment unit. The SVET system is considered a temporary cleanup solution until the final remedy is determined.

Univar is required to conduct start-up testing to see how well the SVET system cleans the vapors, and what kind of operation and maintenance it requires. Our agency will need this information before we can give final approval for the use of this system and this analysis required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The start-up testing should be done by mid-March 2005. The CEQA review and final approval may be completed in April 2005.

What happens next

The overall investigation, which will include more on-site and off-site testing, will continue until we have enough information to design a plan to clean up all contamination from the Univar USA Inc, Jillson Street property, however far it extends. Once the site investigation is finished, we will conduct a study to determine the final cleanup remedy. This study will include a comparison of different cleanup options and a CEQA analysis of the option we propose. Before we make a final decision, we will put our proposal out for public review and comment. It is anticipated that the site investigations will be completed in 2005 and the final remedy chosen in early 2006.

Whom to contact at DTSC

Leticia Hernandez
Public Participation Specialist
(714) 484-5488; lhernand@dtsc.ca.gov

Lorraine Larsen-Hallock - Project Manager
(916) 255-3578; Llarsenh@dtsc.ca.gov

For media inquiries

Jeanne Garcia
DTSC Public Information Officer
(818) 551-2176
jgarcia1@dtsc.ca.gov

More information available in the libraries and at our office

You can get more information about the project at the local library. You can find details about the indoor air results from the USEPA's summary portion of the report dated December 8, 2004 and our documents about the Univar USA Inc, Jillson Street site. The libraries are at the following locations:

City of Commerce Public library
(Central library)
5644 Jillson Street
Commerce, CA 90040
(323) 722-6660 ext. 2275

City of Commerce Public library
(Atlantic branch)
2269 S. Atlantic Blvd.
Commerce, CA 90040
(323) 887-4494

Department of Toxic Substances Control
1011 North Grandview Avenue
Glendale, CA 91201
Please contact Jone Barrio at (818) 551-2800 for an appointment.

Notice to the Hearing Impaired: For more information, you may use the California State Relay Service at 1(888) 877-5378 (TDD). Ask them to contact Leticia Hernandez at (714) 484-5488.

For more information about DTSC, visit our website at www.dtsc.ca.gov