



Agency for Toxic Substances
and Disease Registry
Atlanta, GA 30333

December 20, 2007

Dear Coalition Member:

Thank you for visiting with us on Tuesday, November 13, 2007 at the EPA Region 9 Building. Our discussion focused on your concerns about the September 10, 2007 report issued by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the accompanying letter from Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) related to the grading activities at Hunters Point Shipyard (HPS) Parcel A. The documents provided a complete response to the request from the City/County of San Francisco for assistance. We concluded that the best method available for protecting the health of people living near the site was to enhance methods to control and prevent exposure to dust at Parcel A.

Three specific issues were raised by the community coalition at our meeting: 1) the need to conduct a health symptom survey for the community adjacent to Parcel A; 2) identifying inorganic contaminants in dust and determining if there is an association with reported health effects and 3) sharing information on how to petition ATSDR. This letter provides our response to these issues.

1) During our conversation, Dr. Ahimsa Sumchai suggested further study by reviewing data from hospital admissions or clinic visits for indication of particulate exposures in the Bayview Hunters Point Community.

In the September 10th report, CDPH and ATSDR concluded that a health study would not be useful in further protecting people's health. First, there are no tests that demonstrate the immediate health effects from exposure to asbestos. Second, while some acute health outcomes (e.g., asthma, sinusitis, and upper airway irritation) may be caused by dust exposures, these conditions are common and occur in the presence or absence of dust. Known causes of these conditions include infectious and non-infectious agents including indoor air contaminants and allergens. Third, the available air monitoring data appears insufficient for attributing the occurrence of these health outcomes to past dust exposures from Hunter's Point. Given these conditions, conducting a health study would require significant time and could provide an indeterminant result even if some individuals in the community had been affected. Should you wish to pursue a health study, please contact Dr. Rajiv Bhatia, San Francisco Department of Public Health.

2) There were questions about inorganic contaminants in dust.

The air monitoring conducted during the mass grading activities of 2006 – 2007 did not identify specific substances (including inorganics) other than asbestos. Before the parcel was transferred, the Navy examined inorganic contaminants in soil. This earlier data would not provide an accurate estimate of exposures during the mass grading activities. If you are interested in reviewing the soil data, it is located in a document entitled: Remedial Investigation for Parcel A, Hunters Point Shipyard, 1995. It is also available in the Finding of Suitability to Transfer, Parcel A, 2004. You should be able to obtain copies of these documents at the HPS Information Repository located at:

Bayview/Anna E. Walden Branch Library
5075 Third Street
San Francisco, CA 94124

If you have any questions about the information in these documents you should contact the Navy or one of the enforcement agencies as indicated below:

Position	Name	Contacts	
		Phone Number	Email
EPA Site Manager	Mark Ripperda	415-972-3028	ripperda.mark@epa.gov
EPA Community Involvement Coordinator	Jackie Lane	800-231-3075	lane.jackie@epa.gov
Public Information Center		415-947-8701	r9.info@epamail.epa.gov
State Contact	Tom Lanphar	510-540-3776	tlanphar@dtsc.ca.gov
PRP Contact	U.S. Navy Contact - Keith Forman	619-532-0913	FormanKS@efdswnavfac.navy.mil

3) There was a request for information about the ATSDR petition process.

The ATSDR petition process enables communities and members of the public to request directly the assistance of ATSDR. Information about the ATSDR petitioning process is available on our website at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/HAC/petition.html>. To petition ATSDR you need to write to:

Director, NCEH/ATSDR
1600 Clifton Road, NE (E28)
Atlanta, GA 30329-4027

In the letter, you must include:

- your name, address, and phone number;
- the name of the group you represent, if any;
- the name, location, and description of the facility or release;
- any information you may have about people being exposed to toxic substances;
- a request for ATSDR to perform a Public Health Assessment.

Information that is not required, but may be helpful:

- Information about the facility or release - such as the chemical you are concerned about, the amount in the environment now or in the past, or the parties you believe may be responsible;
- Exposure pathways;
- How many people might be exposed - particularly how many older persons and children;
- Other government agencies you have contacted or which have investigated already.

The decision to grant a petition is made by a committee of scientists at ATSDR and is based on the nature and circumstance of the problem and the availability of new information. If you have questions or need assistance with the Petition process, please contact CDR Susan Neurath at 404-498-0374 or sneurath@cdc.gov.

ATSDR staff has kept me informed of the situation at Hunter's Point and the various concerns expressed by the diverse community who reside nearby. ATSDR and CDPH staff has worked extremely hard on this issue. I believe we have provided the community with meaningful information. Our recommendations are targeted at preventing future exposures to dust and asbestos. Further evaluations of historic information are unlikely to produce meaningful results that will improve people's health status. At this time, I have asked our staff in the regional office in San Francisco to focus their efforts on the other sites we are engaged in. I will be happy to answer any further questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Thomas Sinks, Ph.D.

Deputy Director, National Center for Environmental
Health/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease
Registry

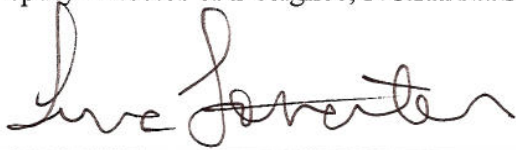
cc

Susan Muza, ATSDR
Rick Kreutzer, CDPH

NCEH/ATSDR Correspondence Approval Form

Approved: _____
Director or Designee, NCEH/ATSDR _____
Date

Approved: _____
Deputy Director or Designee, NCEH/ATSDR _____
Date

Approved:  _____
Division Director or Designee _____
Date 12/19/07

Approved: _____
Branch Chief or Designee _____
Date

Prepared by: _____
(Title) _____
Date

Division/Office: _____ Phone: _____
AI #: _____