



DTSC's oversight of Riverside County hazardous waste cleanup will make way for future freeway interchange

Riverside County transportation officials are moving forward with the cleanup of a former foundry site in Corona even though the effects of the recession extended development timelines for the property.

Riverside County Transportation Commission bought the 10.75 acres on Temescal Canyon Road in 2006 with the intention of building an interchange for the proposed Mid-Valley Parkway, which would connect Interstates 15 and 215.

That may still happen, said Commission Deputy Director John Standiford, but likely not as soon as originally expected. Nonetheless, the commission is proceeding with the state-supervised site cleanup because it is strategically located in the path of growth.

"It will serve some sort of purpose at some point," Standiford said. "Cleanup of the site is important regardless. New residential and commercial are getting closer to the site." A shopping center lies to the northwest and the nearest home is 1,000 feet to the southeast.

Thus, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is presiding over a voluntary cleanup of the now-vacant property. In the 1950s, Liston Aluminum Brick Company started making bricks and other clay products there. In 1975, it was retooled to receive scrap metal that was smelted in furnaces and cast in molds to make aluminum foundry ingots, which were sold to manufacturers.

Deconstruction started after the Transportation Commission bought the property, and DTSC was brought in to oversee the cleanup of its toxic legacy. No immediate health risk exists because contaminated soil is below ground, and the site is fenced and locked. However, some of the toxic contaminants are above the Department's protective standards.

Elevated levels of hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds and metals were found in soil as far down as 15 feet. A proposed cleanup plan calls for removing and disposing of 1,520 cubic yards – equal to 76 truckloads - of contaminated soil in a licensed landfill. Public comments are being accepted until Aug. 11.