



Excavation underway

Site Facts

Site Name:

Park Avenue Elementary School

Location:

Cudahy, Los Angeles County

Certification Date:

April 2004

Site Size:

7 Acres

Historical Uses:

Landfill and waste dump since 1920's, school site since 1968

Length of Cleanup:

3.5 years

Contaminants of Concern:

Petroleum hydrocarbons, lead, arsenic, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons

Redeveloped Use:

Existing school

School Revitalization

SUCCESS STORY, May 2006

Park Avenue Elementary School

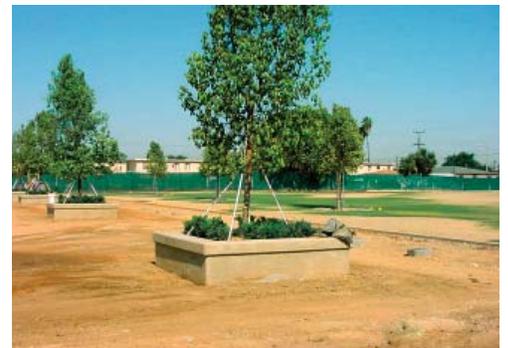
Although not required by law, school districts may request Department of Toxic Substances Control's (DTSC's) oversight of investigations and cleanups at existing schools. At the request of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), DTSC was brought in to oversee cleanup of the Park Avenue Elementary School in January of 2000 when oily liquids bubbled up through the playground, alarming teachers and parents. This reoccurring problem was thought to have been brought under control by LAUSD's previous cleanup actions at the school site from 1989 to 1990.

Park Avenue Elementary School, located in the City of Cudahy, south of Los Angeles, was built in 1968 on a property that had been used as a landfill and waste dump since the 1920's. In 1968, an oily liquid penetrated the playground asphalt surface during the hot summer months. Several rounds of soil and air sampling were conducted intermittently over the years after discovery of the oily liquid. The school was closed in 1989 for three months while a Phase I investigation was performed. In 1990, under DTSC oversight, LAUSD installed a passive gas ventilation system with three aboveground vents and a high-density membrane in the playground as an Interim Measure, pending completion of a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study. In June of 1994, DTSC reviewed the effectiveness of the interim remedy, and recommended further assessment be conducted. LAUSD lacked sufficient funding to conduct this assessment and continued to conduct periodic soil vapor and air sampling from 1990 to 2000.

In 2000, under DTSC oversight, LAUSD began a Remedial Investigation (RI) at the site. The RI included comprehensive soil and soil gas sampling, as well as a groundwater investigation. The contaminants of concern at the site were total petroleum hydrocarbons, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, lead, and arsenic. Following preparation of a Feasibility Study to compare cleanup alternatives, a Remedial Action Plan for soil at the site was approved by DTSC in February of 2002.

Soil excavation was initiated in December of 2002. In June of 2003, the school was temporarily closed, and students were relocated to nearby schools for two years. During the remedial activities, all existing school buildings were wrapped to protect them from hazardous dust emissions, and a nearby road was closed to restrict access to the site. During the soil remediation activities, contaminated soils were found at depths reaching the groundwater level at 15 feet. A total of 141,860 tons of impacted soils were excavated, stockpiled, and transported to offsite facilities. Approximately 95,000 cubic yards of clean soils were imported from five non-industrial sites to backfill the excavated areas. The excavation was completed on October 3, 2003; following import of clean fill, the Removal Action Completion Report was approved on April 22, 2004. Due to broad regional groundwater contamination, potentially impacting the school, the adjacent park, and residences, the groundwater investigation was referred to DTSC's Statewide Cleanup Operations Division for completion.

This was the largest soil removal conducted under DTSC's School Division oversight. DTSC certified the soil excavation activities on April 22, 2004. The school celebrated its grand re-opening in Fall of 2004.



After



State of California



Department of Toxic Substances Control

