

Fact Sheet
June 2002

Woodcrest Schools Site Fact Sheet



Proposed Methane Mitigation System

INTRODUCTION

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



This fact sheet describes an environmental investigation and proposed methane mitigation system for the Woodcrest Schools Site, located at 2725 South Campus Avenue in Ontario, California. The mitigation will be conducted by the Chino Valley Unified School District (CVUSD) under the oversight of the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC).

As part of its new schools planning process, the CVUSD conducted environmental investigations at the proposed Site under the oversight of the DTSC, a department of the California Environmental Protection Agency. The Site investigations detected concentrations of methane in soil gas samples that exceed DTSC health risk levels. While exposure to methane does not pose a direct health risk to children or staff, it is a potential explosive hazard at elevated concentrations. As a result of the investigation findings CVUSD is proposing mitigation measures to ensure the natural venting of the methane. DTSC agreed that mitigation measures should be installed during the construction of new buildings and existing buildings should be retrofitted in order to mitigate the risk posed by the potential build-up of methane in or beneath the structures. Post-construction monitoring will be conducted by the CVUSD with DTSC oversight to ensure the system is working properly and the Site will be considered safe for students and faculty.

Miller Brooks Environmental, Inc., on behalf of CVUSD, has prepared a Removal Action Workplan (RAW) for the mitigation measures to be taken in response to the findings of the environmental investigations. The DTSC is accepting comments on the proposed removal action during the 30-day public comment period starting June 26, 2002.

OPEN HOUSE

CVUSD District Offices,
Board Room
5130 Riverside Drive
Ontario, CA 91761
Monday, July 8, 2002
Time: 5 –7 pm

DTSC will hold an open house to provide you with information about the proposed Removal Action Workplan and findings of the environmental investigations for the proposed site.

DTSC encourages you to take an active interest in the issues affecting the hazardous substance cleanup activities at this school site by attending this meeting and submitting your comments on the removal action plan. *Spanish interpreters will be provided at the meeting.*

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

June 26 – July 26, 2002

**Written comments on the RAW
can be submitted to:**

Jennifer Jones, DTSC
1011 North Grandview Avenue
Glendale, CA 91201
Telephone: (818) 551-2973
E-mail: JJones@dtsc.ca.gov

The complete RAW report and other related project documents are available at the Repositories listed on Page 3.

SITE HISTORY

The proposed Site is currently developed as Woodcrest Junior High School, and comprises a total of approximately 20.5 acres. The western portion of the Site is developed as Woodcrest Junior High School, with associated classrooms, multi-purpose room, administrative offices, kitchen, and playground areas. The eastern portion of the Site is vacant, with the exception of two utility structures and athletic areas. The Site is bounded on the north by Kimball Park and residential development, on the east by Bon View Avenue, on the south by residential development, and on the west by Campus Avenue. Kimball Park is used by the school under a joint-use agreement and was, therefore, included as part of the Site and in the original investigation. However, no structures associated with the school are proposed on the park property, excluding it from the proposed mitigation measures.

SITE INVESTIGATION

Environmental investigations were performed to determine if any harmful hazardous substances are present on the schools Site that pose a threat to public health or the environment. Evaluation of the Site began with a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment of the property, compiled by Anthony-Taylor Consultants, dated August 14, 1999. A Preliminary Endangerment Assessment (PEA), dated September 12, 2000, was completed by Miller Brooks Environmental. Based on preliminary findings contained in these reports, it was determined that elevated levels of methane, most likely due to former dairy operations, were present beneath the Site.

Based on the environmental investigation, it was determined that the proposed construction may hinder the methane's natural attenuation. Although methane is not a direct risk human health, concentrations above the lower explosive limit may accumulate beneath structures, presenting a potential fire hazard. Therefore, a methane mitigation system consisting of a vent piping system and methane barrier will be installed beneath the new buildings during construction in order to allow venting of the methane to the atmosphere. Existing buildings will be retrofitted with a similar vent piping system.

REMOVAL ACTION WORKPLAN (RAW) SCOPE

The RAW, prepared in May 2002, identifies and screens possible removal action alternatives. Removal action alternatives were screened and evaluated on the basis of their effectiveness, feasibility, and cost. Screening of mitigation techniques using these criteria

was conducted to select removal actions for further evaluation. A methane mitigation system to be installed beneath the structures has been selected as the preferred alternative for the Site. This alternative was selected because it was determined to be effective, feasible, and cost effective. In addition, it is permanent, and protective of public health and the environment.

PROPOSED REMOVAL ACTION ACTIVITIES

A methane mitigation system will be installed under DTSC oversight during the construction of the new school buildings. The system for existing buildings includes vent piping and a methane barrier placed beneath the foundation of the building, with vent risers attached to the buildings and extending above the roofline. Existing buildings will be retrofitted with vent piping and risers. Details of the methane mitigation system are included in the Removal Action Workplan.

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION (NOE)

A CEQA draft Notice of Exemption (NOE) for the proposed removal action has been prepared by the DTSC and is being reviewed by the State of California. The project is exempt since it will not have a significant effect on the environment due to the nature of the system. Additionally, the removal action costs will not exceed \$1 million, and therefore meets the CEQA exemption based on a Class 30 exemption as described in Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Section 15330. This exemption allows for minor removal actions to be taken to manage areas impacted by potentially hazardous substances. The draft NOE will be finalized following the public comment period.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Before a final determination is made, the DTSC will receive public comments on the Woodcrest Schools Site RAW during the 30-day public comment period, which ends July 26, 2002. Comments may be submitted in writing to Ms. Jennifer Jones, Project Manager, Department of Toxic Substances Control, 1011 North Grandview Avenue, Glendale, California 91201. Comments must be postmarked on or before July 26, 2002.

At the completion of the public comment period, the DTSC will evaluate the submitted comments. If the RAW is approved, the proposed methane mitigation system will be installed concurrently with construction. According to CVUSD, construction of the Elementary School will begin on August 1, 2002, and take approximately 12 months to complete. Expansion of the Junior High facilities is expected to begin in the

