



Department of  
Toxic Substances  
Control

*The Mission of the  
Department of  
Toxic Substances  
Control is to  
provide the highest  
level of safety, and  
to protect public  
health and the  
environment from  
toxic harm.*



State of California



California  
Environmental  
Protection Agency

Fact Sheet, February 2010

## Proposed Century High School Environmental Assessment Documents Available for Review

A draft plan to clean up soil from the **Proposed New Century High School (Site)** is available for public review and comment. The draft plan, called a **Removal Action Workplan (RAW)**, was submitted by the **Alhambra Unified School District (AUSD)** for the proposed 1.14-acre Site located at 20 and 24 Marengo Avenue in Alhambra, California to the **Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)**. *See Site map on page 4.*

The DTSC is part of the California Environmental Protection Agency. DTSC oversees soil and groundwater investigations at proposed new or expanding school sites, and evaluates property for potential hazardous materials or contamination that may pose a risk to school children, the staff or faculty prior to construction. If contamination is found, DTSC oversees the cleanup of the property.

Environmental investigations conducted by Ultra-Systems, on behalf of the AUSD, found elevated levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) including benzene, ethylbenzene, xylene, and

tetrachloroethylene (PCE) in soil gas within the 0.16-acre AUSD Transportation Facility on the Site. AUSD is proposing to excavate or dig up the impacted soil at the Site under DTSC's oversight. The excavated soil will be disposed of at an off-site landfill facility.

### Why Cleanup Is Necessary

**There is no immediate health risk because the public is not exposed to the contaminated soil, since the contaminants are located several feet beneath the ground.** However, long-term exposure to elevated levels of these contaminants can cause adverse health effects. DTSC will ensure that the cleanup is performed in a manner that does not harm people or the environment.

### This Fact Sheet provides a brief summary of:

- Why Cleanup Is Necessary
- History and Operations at the Site
- Environmental Investigations
- Proposed Cleanup Options
- Safety & Dust Control During Cleanup
- Proposed Transportation Route for Trucks
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- Next Steps

## PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

**February 22 to March 22, 2010**

The draft plan and other related project documents for this school site will be available for review at the locations listed on page 3. The DTSC will make a final decision on the draft plan after all public comments have been reviewed and considered. Please submit written comments in the enclosed postage paid envelope postmarked **by March 22, 2010**; or by email before the deadline date no later than 5 p.m. to:

Christina Fu, Public Participation Specialist  
5796 Corporate Avenue, Cypress, CA 90630  
[cfu@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:cfu@dtsc.ca.gov)

*Si desea información en español, comuníquese con Juan Osornio al (714) 484-5498*



## History and Operations at the Site

The proposed Site is bordered by Goudy Honda to the north, Marengo Avenue to the west, portions of the existing CHS campus and AUSD Transportation Facility to the south, and All Souls Church to the east. Historically, the Site was vacant until the 1950s when the AUSD Transportation Facility was constructed, and the 1960s when an Adult and Continuing Educational Center was constructed in the current location of the Site. Based on review of available information, the proposed Site was used for transportation maintenance and educational purposes since the 1950s and 1960s.

## Environmental Investigations

In compliance with State laws for proposed new school sites, AUSD conducted an initial environmental investigation in 2008 to determine if historical activities posed a potential threat to future occupants at the Site. Based on the investigation, the Site was divided into two areas (Figure 1) which included:

**Area A** (0.98 acres), which includes single-story modular structures, bus maintenance building, school bus wash area, and materials and waste storage area. No significant subsurface impacts were observed in this area.

**Area B** (0.16 acres), which includes a former Gasoline Underground Storage Tank (UST) area where elevated concentrations of benzene, ethylbenzene, and xylene were detected in soil matrix and soil gas samples collected up to 25 feet below the ground surface (bgs), and a southern portion that consists of the Materials Storage Area where PCE was detected in soil gas samples and soil matrix samples collected approximately 15 feet bgs.

DTSC issued a no further action (NFA) determination for Area A, and requested further investigations for Area B. The additional sampling conducted was to further assess the extent of impact within Area B of the Site. Based on the results and recommendations, DTSC has determined that concentration of certain VOCs in soil gas in isolated areas in Area B must be reduced to levels that are protective of human health and the environment.

## Proposed Cleanup Options

Various cleanup options were evaluated to

determine which will be the best choice based on effectiveness, feasibility and cost. The following four cleanup options were considered for this site:

Alternative 1 – No action

Alternative 2 – Soil vapor extraction (SVE)

Alternative 3 – Excavation and disposal of impacted soil.

Alternative 4 – Excavation and disposal of impacted soil followed by soil vapor extraction (SVE).

The draft RAW recommends Alternative 3 to reduce VOCs in soil gas because this approach is protective of human health and the environment, is compliant with applicable or relevant and appropriate requirements; is feasible, is effective, and has a reasonable cost.

If this approach is accepted by the DTSC, the contaminated soil will be excavated using a backhoe, bulldozer, tracked excavator, shovels or other types of earth moving equipment, as necessary, to depths up to approximately 25 feet bgs. The soil will be loaded directly onto trucks and transported off-site. An estimated 411 cubic yards (about 30 truckloads) of soil impacted with VOCs will be excavated and transported to a state licensed and approved Disposal and/or Treatment Facility. Work will occur over a period of approximately 20 working days, and will include soil and UST removal, transportation, and proper disposal. Following removal of soil, confirmation soil gas samples will be collected.

## Safety & Dust Control during Cleanup

The following actions will be implemented during this process to ensure public safety and minimize dust:

- Installing temporary fencing with windscreens for security and dust control, as needed
- Driving all vehicles at slow speeds while on the property and streets
- Spraying of work areas with clean water or suppressant to control dust
- Securing trucks with covers before they leave the site
- Brushing tires of trucks entering and exiting the site to remove soils and debris
- Monitoring the air at the site to ensure the amount of dust remains at safe levels

## **Proposed Transportation Route for Trucks**

To keep dust exposures at a minimum, AUSD plans on performing excavation activities from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. Approximately 30 truckloads of contaminated soil will be removed from the Site. Two trucks will be needed to transport two 10,000 gallon USTs to an off-site location for disposal.

To minimize potential impacts on the local neighborhood, trucks will enter the site from Acacia Street. Trucks will exit the site to Acacia Street, travel west to South Marengo Avenue, travel north to West Main Street, travel east to South Atlantic Boulevard, travel south to the I-10 Freeway, and proceed east to a state-approved disposal facility.

## **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**

In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), DTSC has prepared a draft Notice of Exemption (NOE) for this project. The NOE states that the proposed project is exempt since it will not have a significant effect on the environment due to the small amount of contaminated soil to be removed, the short project duration, and the controlled manner in which the contaminated soils and USTs will be removed, loaded onto trucks and transported off-site for disposal. Additionally, the removal action costs will not exceed \$2 million, and therefore meets the CEQA exemption. 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.

## **Next Steps**

At the end of the Public Comment Period, DTSC will review and consider any public comments, and make any necessary revisions to the draft RAW prior to final approval. Also, a Response to Comments document will be mailed to everyone who submits a comment and provides their name and address. Removal actions are expected to begin in April 2010. After the remediation process is completed, AUSD will conduct follow up sampling to confirm cleanup goals have been achieved and submit a Removal Action Completion Report (RACR) to the DTSC for review and approval.

## **Where to Find the Documents**

The draft RAW and other related documents for the proposed New Century High School site will be available for review at the following locations:

### **Alhambra Unified School District**

Administration Building  
1515 West Mission Road  
Alhambra, CA 91803  
Contact: Keith Matsuo (626) 943-6540

### **Alhambra Public Library**

410 West Main Street  
Alhambra, CA  
Contact: Reference Department  
(626) 570-3212

### **Department of Toxic Substances Control**

File Room  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, CA 90630  
Contact: Julie Johnson  
(714) 484-5337

To view electronic versions of the draft RAW, Notice of Exemption and other related documents, please visit DTSC's EnviroStor website:

<http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/>

Enter Alhambra as the City and select Century High School. Click on the link "Report" then "Community Involvement".

## **Who to Contact for Information**

For questions about the cleanup, please contact:

Rana Georges  
DTSC Project Manager  
(714) 484-5320  
[rgeorges@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:rgeorges@dtsc.ca.gov)

Christina Fu  
DTSC Public Participation Specialist  
(714) 484-5488  
Or Toll Free (866) 495-5651 [*Press 4 twice*]  
[cfu@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:cfu@dtsc.ca.gov)

### **Media Inquiries:**

Jeanne Garcia  
DTSC Public Information Officer  
(818) 717-6573  
[jgarcial@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:jgarcial@dtsc.ca.gov)

## **Notice to Hearing-Impaired Individuals**

You can obtain additional information about the site by using the California State Relay Service at 1 (888) 877-5378 (TDD). Ask them to contact Christina Fu at (714) 484-5488 regarding the project.

