

Newhall Remediation Project

A newsletter provided by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

Decisions about the cleanup possible in 2005

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Additional Testing Begins.....</i>	3
<i>Newhall Advisory Committee Meets</i>	3
<i>Public Meetings in 2005</i>	4
<i>Contact Information.....</i>	4

This publication is the fifth issue of a quarterly newsletter that is published by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection to inform the public about what's happening to examine and clean up pollution in the Newhall area of Hamden.

The DEP has been working since late 2000 to understand the full extent of contamination problems caused by dumping industrial and household wastes 50-100 years ago.

Final reports for spring

Testing for contamination in the Newhall neighborhood is winding down, and this spring, residents will get a complete picture of what was found.

Final reports on the investigation are due in March and April and will suggest ways the contamination can be cleaned up. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will pour through volumes of data and be ready to discuss the results at public meetings in May and June.

Residents have been frustrated by how long it seems the testing has taken. Problems with contamination in the Newhall neighborhood surfaced in late 2000. However, little could be done to begin a process to clean it up until the parties who were found responsible agreed to investigate the problem and fund a solution.

This did not happen until April of 2003.

Since then, DEP has been overseeing the investigation, making sure it is thorough and pushing for its completion on schedule in Spring 2005.

Once the full extent of the contamination is known, the next step will be to figure out what to do about it. The Newhall community will participate in the discussions of cleanup solutions presented by the responsible parties. DEP will be looking for input through public

forums and a working committee, the Newhall Advisory Committee, before a final cleanup plan is approved by the agency.

What's taking so long?

At a recent meeting of the Newhall Advisory Committee one member asked, "Why is it taking so long to clean up this neighborhood when it takes three weeks to clean up millions of gallons of oil spilled in Long Island Sound?"

Good question!

Elsie Patton of DEP said there were a lot of differences between the two situations that explain why it takes a lot more time to clean up contamination in the Newhall neighborhood.



Elsie Patton of the CT DEP

First of all it's easy to see exactly where the contamination is when it spills into the ocean. It's visible, lying on top of the surface of the water. And it's easy to reach.

The contamination in the Newhall neighborhood is invisible. It's buried under people's homes and yards, the Middle School property and public parks. Around 300 separate properties are included in the area under investigation.

continued on page 2

“Carrying out a cleanup plan will be complicated, but DEP will make sure that health and safety standards are met...”

— Elsie Patton

Unlike an oil spill that happens all at once and has clear limits of where it’s located, contamination in the Newhall neighborhood occurred as a result of more than 50 years of filling in wetlands with household and industrial waste at 14 or more dump sites. Extensive testing needed to be done to pinpoint the exact areas where there is waste and what the waste is.

When an oil spill occurs it’s easy to identify how it happened and who’s responsible for cleaning it up.

In the Newhall neighborhood it took over two years for DEP to get those responsible for the waste, Olin Corporation, the Regional Water Authority, and the Town of Hamden, to agree to clean it up. During that time, soil testing began and temporary actions were taken to protect people’s health. Thirteen residential properties with high lead levels in soil were cleaned up by EPA. In December, DEP placed mulch and soil over bare spots on eight

additional properties as recent testing results became available.

Carrying out a cleanup plan will be complicated because of the location of waste under people’s homes. However, DEP will work on a solution that will make sure state health and safety standards are met in the Newhall neighborhood.

When will the cleanup start?

Several things must happen before the ground is actually cleaned up. First, the exact location of all the waste and contamination and the severity of the contamination must be clearly determined. This information is expected to be completed by June 2005.

Then, a plan must be developed by each responsible party to clean up the contamination with as little risk to residents as possible and to be permanently effective. Whenever the ground is dug up, if there is polluted soil, it is important to be very careful how

the digging happens, so people aren’t exposed to more contamination than if the ground was never disturbed.

Careful planning must be done without risking the health of the neighborhood residents and school students. It will take the participation of a number of scientists and contamination experts for this plan to be developed.

Before DEP approves any cleanup plan, DEP will share the proposed plan with the Newhall Advisory Committee and the general public and get public comments. Only after hearing from the public will DEP select a plan for clean up.

When will the problem be fixed?

Once a plan is approved, the actual cleanup process will begin immediately. Depending on the options selected, the cleanup could begin in early 2006. Some properties could be cleaned up quickly, while others could take a few years to complete.

Project Schedule - 2005

Jan-Feb

Testing of residential properties, school and parks wraps up.

March

Final reports on residential properties (Olin - March 23) and Hamden Middle School (Regional Water Authority - March 31) are due.

April- May

Final report on parks (Town of Hamden) is due April 30. DEP reviews report on residential properties (what was found, what does it mean?). Public meeting will be held in May.

Jun

DEP completes reports on tow (school, parks). ing will be held

DEP Begins Additional Testing of Newhall Neighborhood in Hamden

DEP announced in February that it began testing certain residential areas in the Newhall Neighborhood. The properties in question are located adjacent to areas where landfill materials have been found in the vicinity of Hamden Middle School and the surrounding neighborhood by other investigators, including the Town of Hamden, Olin Corporation, and the Regional Water Authority. A Consent Order issued by the DEP on April 23, 2003 required the Town of Hamden, Olin Corporation, and the Regional Water Authority to investigate and cleanup of specific portions of the Newhall Street neighborhood in Hamden. DEP's investigation will determine whether landfill materials extend beyond the investigation boundary established in the 2003 Consent Order. The work to be performed by DEP's consultant, Loureiro Engineering Associates, Inc., began on February 8, 2005 and



is expected to take about 4 to 6 weeks to complete, depending on site access and weather. The work will include inspecting ground surface conditions, collecting shallow soil samples, and in some cases, drilling

soil borings on approximately 45 private properties. The DEP and its consultant have contacted affected property owners regarding this work. The results of the investigation are expected later this spring. For questions on this matter please contact Shannon Pociu from the DEP at (860) 424-3546.

Newhall Advisory Committee Meets

A stakeholders committee, the Newhall Advisory Committee (NAC), was organized in the fall and held its first meeting in December 2004.

Members of the committee are:

- People who are affected by the contamination and clean up (residents, property owners, churches, businesses)
- People who are responsible for the clean up
- People who have influence over how the community will look after the clean up
- People with oversight and decision making authority over the contamination and clean up

Residents from the Newhall neighborhood make up the majority of members. New resident members from the Prospect Lane, North Sheffield Street, Morse Street, Winchester Avenue area are needed. DEP, the local health department and responsible parties (Olin, Water Authority, and Town) will attend meetings but not participate unless asked.

The newly established Newhall Advisory Committee (NAC) has scheduled regular meetings the third Thursday of every month from 6:30-8:30 PM at the Keefe Center. Meetings are open to the public.

e	<u>July-October</u>	<u>Oct-Nov</u>	<u>December</u>
s review of yn properties Public meet- in June.	Newhall Advisory Committee meets with DEP to discuss, evaluate cleanup options.	Public meeting(s) held to discuss cleanup options.	Preferred options identified by community. Dialogue may continue into 2006.



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
79 ELM STREET
HARTFORD, CT 06106-5127

We're on the web!
www.newhallinfo.org

Contact Info

Shannon Windisch Pociu
Remediation Section
Department of Environmental
Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106-5127
(860) 424-3546
FAX: (860) 424-4057
shannon.pociu@po.state.ct.us

Newhall Remediation Office
Keefe Community Center
11 Pine Street
Hamden, CT 06514
(203) 498-0190
dep.newhalloffice@po.state.ct.us

Leslie Balch
Quinnipiac Valley Health Dist.
1151 Hartford Turnpike
North Haven, CT 06473
(203) 248-4528
FAX: (203) 248-6671
LAB@qvhd.org

Meg Harvey
Connecticut Department of
Public Health
P.O. Box 340308
410 Capitol Ave. MS#11CHA
Hartford, CT 06134-0308
(860) 509-7748
FAX: (860) 509-7785
margaret.harvey@po.state.ct.us

Public Meetings in 2005

DEP will be adopting a new schedule for public meetings in 2005 to coordinate with the project schedule. Meetings will be planned in May and June to discuss the results of testing. At those meetings, the public will learn exactly where and what the waste is. At least one meeting will be scheduled in the fall to discuss cleanup options.

In 2004 DEP held quarterly meetings that were tied to the schedule of the investigation. Review of work plans

for testing and public comments on the plans made up the agenda of these meetings.

DEP will continue to publish a quarterly newsletter for the area residents, officials and interested members of the public.

The dates of the public meetings will be widely publicized in local papers, through community contacts, the project website (www.newhallinfo.org), and in this newsletter.

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection will publish this newsletter on a quarterly basis. If you would like to be on the mailing list or have suggestions for topics in future issues, please contact Jill Barrett, (860) 570-0740, jbarrett@fhiplan.com



Printed on recycled paper