REPRINTED BY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
Centers For Disease Control
Atlanta, Georgia 30333

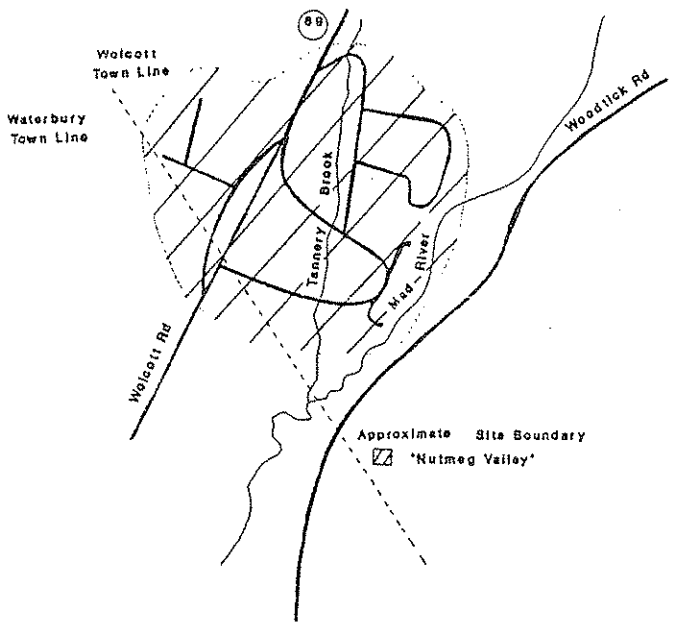
State of Connecticut

Health Information on Hazardous Waste Sites

NUTMEG VALLEY ROAD

The Nutmeg Valley Road industrial area is one of fifteen "Superfund" hazardous waste sites in Connecticut. The Connecticut Department of Health Services, in cooperation with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, is assessing the potential impact for contamination at this site to result in adverse health effects in the neighboring community. The document containing this assessment is referred to as a "Health Assessment" and has been produced from data provided by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, the US Environmental Protection Agency, and other groups involved with the management of this site. If you have specific concerns about the health implications of this site please write or call Brian Toal at the Connecticut Department of Health Services, Division of Environmental Epidemiology and Occupational Health, 150 Washington Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106, (203) 566-8167.

SITE SUMMARY



(not to scale)

The Nutmeg Valley Road Superfund site occupies approximately 155 acres of mixed residential and industrial properties. Site boundaries are only approximated until a Remedial Investigation can be conducted by the EPA. The site is located on the Wolcott/Waterbury town line where Route 69 crosses the town borders. This site is located within a small river basin.

History

Industrial waste materials, solvents, acid washes, and scrap metal debris, were disposed of into the sandy soils of the site as early as the 1940's. Groundwater contamination was first discovered by state and local health officials in several private wells during 1979-81. The US Environmental Protection Agency placed this site on the National Priority

List in 1989, qualifying the site for clean up funds under the federal Superfund law.

Current Conditions

Most people near this site draw water from natural underground water supplies for domestic uses such as drinking, cooking, and bathing. Industries located at this site also use the groundwater for industrial and hygienic purposes. Although a public water system has been extended to service the Nutmeg Valley Road area, many people have not connected to this system.

There is not enough data at the present time to determine if all groundwater being used by the residential and industrial occupants within this site is safe to drink. The limited data presently available show that some areas of groundwater have been contaminated. There may be contaminated areas which have not yet been identified.

CONTAMINATION

Private well water supplies have been contaminated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs). VOCs are characterized by their tendency to evaporate (or volatilize) in the air from soil or water. VOCs include substances that are contained in common solvents and cleaning fluids. These compounds include benzene, carbon tetrachloride, 1,2-dichloroethane, tetrachloroethylene, and trichloroethylene. Hazardous waste has been stored in ditches at several properties within the site and may have contributed to a soil contamination problem. There is not enough information to determine what contaminants are in area soils.

HEALTH CONCERNS

One of the most serious health concerns at this site is exposure to contaminated groundwater. Contaminated groundwater used for drinking, cooking, or bathing may create an unacceptable risk to human health. Research studies have shown that many of the contaminants identified in groundwater can be associated with an increased incidence of cancer, especially cancer of the lung, liver, kidney, testes, and blood forming organs (leukemia). Other adverse health effects include degeneration of normal kidney and liver function. Exposure to contaminants in groundwater may also produce a feeling of drowsiness. These symptoms are dependent upon the concentration and duration of exposure. Not everyone who gets exposed to a contaminant will end up with a disease.

These same effects may be produced in people who work in companies on the site that use contaminated groundwater during their daily business activities.

Although there is no scientific information to characterize the status of area surface waters, historical information has identified complaints of severe discoloration in Tannery Brook and claimed the discoloration to be a result of chemical disposal. It is important that people entering the area surface waters are not exposing themselves to contaminants which may be in the sediments of these surface waters.

It is not known if fish are caught in either Mad River or Tannery Brook nor is it known if contamination exists in these surface waters. Data are not presently available to determine what, if any, risk may be associated with consumption of fish caught within the boundaries of this site.

Several ditches containing hazardous waste have been identified within the site. It is important that area residents, primarily children, are not playing in these ditches. It is also important that contaminants from these ditches are not imposing an additional threat to the quality of area groundwater. An investigation will be conducted by EPA to identify how these ditches may be affecting the site.

What You Should Know

* Continued exposure to contaminanted groundwater, either in a residential or industrial setting, may create an unacceptable risk to human health. This risk could manifest as cancer, liver or kidney dysfunction, or central nervous system depression. Because children are in a developing stage and because their bodies are usually small, children constitute a more sensitive population to these potential adverse health effects. As people get older, their immune systems may become impaired. The elderly are also considered to be a more sensitive population. Many of the contaminants identified at this site are detoxified by the liver. People with liver dysfunction, or those people who consume large amounts of alcohol, constitute a third population more sensitive to these potential adverse health effects. If you suspect your water has been effected by contaminants at this site, call your local health department for assistance.

* Children playing in area surface waters or in the ditches, historically reported to contain waste material, may be subjecting themselves to an increased risk of potential adverse health effects. It is not known if these risks are real. Data must be developed to characterize the relative safety of area soils. Until data can be developed to accurately assess the extent of contamination at this site, it is suggested that area residents refrain from entering the sections of Tannery Brook and Mad River which are located within the site boundaries and that residents refrain from entering industrial properties for non-industrial purposes such as walking or biking.

* The underground movement of contaminants in soil and groundwater is evident. Local buildings, both residential and industrial, with foundations located in area wetlands, may be at risk for accumulating volatile organic compounds in these confined air spaces. VOCs can often be detected as a sweet smelling odor. If indoor air contamination is suspected, it would be necessary to ventilate the area. If you wish to have your basement sampled for VOCs, a list of available laboratories can be supplied to you from the Department of Health Services.

INFORMATION RESOURCES

HEALTH: If you have health concerns related to the site, contact your physician. Explain your situation and what you may have been exposed to. Your physician may contact the Chesprocott Health District or the Connecticut Department of Health Services with any questions.

Chesprocott Health District
1247 Highland Avenue
Cheshire, CT 06410
(203) 272-2761

State of Connecticut
Department of Health Services
Environmental Epidemiology and
Occupational Health
150 Washington Street
Hartford, CT 06106
(203) 566-8167

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
Region 1
60 Westview Street
Lexington, MA 02173
(617) 860-4619

WATER QUALITY: If you have concerns about the quality of water around Nutmeg Valley Road contact the Chesprocott Health District or the Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Water Management.

Bureau of Water Management
Groundwater Section
120 Washington Street
Hartford, CT 06106
(203) 566-3654

PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY: If you are interested in connecting to a public water system call the Wolcott Public Works Department, Department of Sewer and Water.

Department of Sewer and Water
48 Todd Road
Wolcott, CT 06716
(203) 879-4658

SUPERFUND: Information regarding the federal Superfund process may be obtained from:

US Environmental Protection Agency
JFK Federal Building (RPA)
Boston, MA 02203
(617) 565-3419

(Prepared by the State of Connecticut Department of Health Services Environmental Epidemiology and Occupational Health and the Center for Communication and Government Relations.)

7/91