

Update for Stephen Foster Neighborhood

October 2012

Koppers Hazardous Waste Site

Florida DOH Releases Draft Health Report on the Fourth Round of Neighborhood Soil Tests

About the Health Agencies

The central office of the Florida Department of Health (DOH), the DOH Alachua County Health Department (ACHD), and the US Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) work jointly to protect the public's health. We distribute facts from scientific studies on toxic chemicals to help Floridians learn how to stay safe. If we find a health threat, we notify people who live near these sites about it right away.

About the Koppers Site

The Koppers hazardous waste site is in Gainesville on Northwest 23rd Avenue west of North Main Street. Since 1916, Koppers used chemicals to treat wood to stop decay. Past waste disposal caused chemicals to leak into the soil and groundwater.

In 1984, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) added the Cabot-Koppers site to the National Priorities List (NPL). Since 1989, Florida DOH and ATSDR have:

- Reviewed environmental data.
- Found the site is a likely health risk.
- Advised the responsible party to post warning signs.
- Asked EPA to do more testing on- and off-site.
- Advised people to keep off the site.
- Notified parents to keep children off city easements next to the site where chemical levels are high in the soil.

People living west of Koppers in the Stephen Foster neighborhood worry that chemicals from the site in the soil, dust in their homes, or in creek sediments might affect their health.

Draft Health Report on Residential Soil Testing

The Florida DOH has drafted a health report available for public review and comment on EPA's fourth set of soil samples from Stephen Foster neighborhood yards. In January 2012, EPA tested surface soil for arsenic, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and dioxins.

***We need your comments on the draft soil report by November 13, 2012!
To access the soil report, see the back of this fact sheet.
Our soil report is at the top of the page under "Draft Documents."***

Review of Recent Soil Tests

Florida DOH and the ATSDR do not expect incidental ingestion (swallowing) of very small amounts of contaminated surface soil in the Stephen Foster neighborhood and surrounding area to harm health in children or adults. However, residents are at a "very low" increased estimated risk of cancer over a lifetime exposure to the levels of chemicals found in the soil.

Dust Testing Inside Stephen Foster Houses

In March 2012, the EPA tested dust inside 17 Stephen Foster houses for dioxin. Florida DOH and ATSDR are waiting for the test results to determine what, if any, health threat exists.

Overall Alachua CHD Advice

The Alachua CHD recommends:

- Area residents wash hands with soap and water after contact with bare soil.
- Parents should keep their children from playing in the City easement next to the site.
- Residents should avoid prolonged exposure to dust from mowing.
- Chickens used for homegrown eggs should be kept in coops or cages to minimize the risk of ingestion to contaminated soils and potentially concentrate contaminants in eggs. (The City of Gainesville only allows a property to contain two chickens.)

Recent Florida DOH Advice for the Stephen Foster Neighborhood

The responsible party should:

- Continue to test for dioxins in Stephen Foster neighborhood surface soil.
- Clean up contaminated surface soil in the Stephen Foster neighborhood.
- Clean up contaminated creek sediments in the Springstead and Hogtown Creeks.

Future Health Activities

Florida DOH will:

- Review the dust testing results.
- Review the results of additional offsite surface soil tests.
- Keep nearby residents up-to-date on any new findings.

For More Details

About health or any of the DOH reports:

- Randy Merchant, Florida Department of Health: 877-798-2772 (randy_merchant@doh.state.fl.us)
- Anthony Dennis, Alachua County Health Department: 352-334-7930 (anthony_dennis@doh.state.fl.us)

About cleanup of the site or dust testing:

- Scott Miller, US Environmental Protection Agency: 404-562-9120 (miller.scott@epamail.epa.gov)

See all 10 Koppers health reports online at:

<http://doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/SUPERFUND/pha.htm>

Or to get hard copies, call us toll-free at 877-798-2772

Or email us at phtoxicology@doh.state.fl.us

Or get them online at the ACHD website at: www.doh.state.fl.us/chdalachua/

