

Update for Stephen Foster Neighborhood

August 2009

Koppers Hazardous Waste Site

Full ATSDR/Florida DOH Report on Stephen Foster Soil Now Available

About the Health Agencies

The Alachua County Health Department (CHD), Florida Department of Health (DOH), and the US Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) serve the public by using the best science, taking responsive public health actions, and providing trusted health information about toxic chemicals at hazardous waste sites.

About the Koppers Site

The Koppers hazardous waste site is near the intersection of North 23rd Avenue and North Main Street in Gainesville. Since 1916, Koppers site owners treated utility poles and timber with chemicals to prevent decay. Past waste disposal caused soil and ground water contamination. In 1984, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) added the Cabot-Koppers site to their Superfund National Priorities List (NPL). Recently, they discovered soil contamination west of the site.

At various times since 1989, Florida DOH reviewed environmental data, found the site a potential health risk, and recommended warning signs, further testing, and restricted site access. Residents of the Stephen Foster neighborhood west of Koppers are concerned about contact with contaminated soil.

On May 15, 2009, the Alachua CHD notified Stephen Foster neighborhood residents near the border with Koppers not to let their children play in the City easement next to the site.

In June 2009, the Florida DOH and the Alachua CHD sponsored an open house for residents to learn more about the Stephen Foster neighborhood soil tests. Both the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) also attended the meeting to answer residents' questions.

The Florida DOH found that incidental ingestion (swallowing) very small amounts of dioxin-contaminated surface soil from the City of Gainesville easement just west of the Koppers site for more than a year could possibly harm children's health.

The Florida DOH found that incidental ingestion (swallowing) very small amounts of surface soil in the neighborhood north and west of the site is not likely to cause harm.

Conclusions

- Incidental ingestion (swallowing) for more than a year of very small amounts of dioxin contaminated surface soil from the City easement between NW 26 and NW 30 Avenues just west of Koppers could possibly harm children's health. Incidental ingestion (swallowing) of very small amounts of soil is common in children less than 6 years old who put soiled fingers or toys in their mouths.
- The extent of surface soil contamination west of Koppers has not been fully tested.
- Incidental ingestion (swallowing) of very small amounts of arsenic or polycyclic aromatic (PAH) contaminated surface soil from easement just west of Koppers over a lifetime is not likely to cause harm. Likewise, incidental ingestion of very small amounts of arsenic, PAHs, and dioxin/furan contaminated surface soil from the neighborhood north and west of Koppers is not likely to cause harm.

Recommendations

- Parents should keep children from playing in the 30-foot wide City of Gainesville easement between NW 26th and NW 30th Avenues just west of the 6-foot chain link fence marking the Koppers boundary.
- Collect more surface soil samples (0-3 inches deep) west of Koppers to find out the extent and degree of contamination. Test for arsenic, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and dioxins/furans.

**The full ATSDR/Florida DOH report on the Stephen Foster neighborhood soil tests is now available at: <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/medicine/SUPERFUND/pha.htm>
Scroll down to Koppers Off-site Surface Soil Health Consultation – July 17, 2009**

Future Health Activities

- Florida DOH will review additional Stephen Foster neighborhood soil test results.
- Florida DOH is analyzing creek sediment sampling data for another health consultation report.
- Florida DOH will review cancer rates in the Stephen Foster area later this year.

For More Information

About health:

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- Anthony Dennis, Alachua County Health Department: 352-334-7930 (anthony_dennis@doh.state.fl.us)

About cleanup of the site:

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

Please share this information with your neighbors!

