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November 17, 2010

The Honorable Craig Lowe
Mayor, City of Gainesville
200 East University Avenue
Station 19, P.O. Box 490
Gainesville, Florida 32602-0490

Dear Mayor Lowe:

Thank you for your letter requesting a health study for the community surrounding the Cabot-Koppers Superfund site in Gainesville, Florida. The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) has been actively supporting the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) in evaluating potential community exposures to contaminants at this site. This partnership is part of ATSDR's long-standing cooperative agreement program with the FDOH.

In a July 2009 report, the FDOH informed the community, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency of a possible health concern due to dioxin contamination found in the City of Gainesville easement outside of the Cabot-Koppers' property boundaries. Based on this finding, FDOH recommended restricting public access to this area and collecting more soil samples in the community. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection is in the process of collecting these samples and the FDOH anticipates receiving the results to review in the coming months. FDOH is currently reviewing test results of off-site contaminated creek sediment.

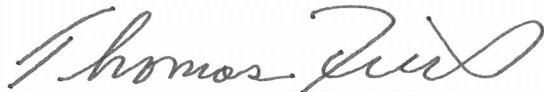
FDOH is reviewing cancer statistics for this community. Results of this analysis will determine whether the community surrounding the property has more cancers than expected. While this is not an analytic epidemiologic study meant to evaluate any potential association with dioxin exposure in the community, this assessment is typically the first step in gathering information on the overall cancer burden for a community and can be useful in determining future needs.

At this time, a "door-to-door" health study based on possible dioxin exposures is not recommended. The potentially exposed population near this site is relatively small. Adverse outcomes associated with dioxin exposures have not been reported in populations exposed to dioxin at the levels seen to date in the community surrounding Cabot-Kopper's property. The health problems of the people living in this community are likely to reflect common health problems seen in any similar group of individuals who do not live adjacent to the Cabot-Koppers

site. Given these facts, it would not be possible to differentiate the health problems within this group that are the result of their exposures to dioxin.

We fully agree with FDOH's plan to evaluate and make recommendations to mitigate any current exposures to protect public health and to also take a broad look at cancer statistics within this community. We will continue to work with our FDOH partners in identifying and reducing Alachua community exposures to environmental contaminants on and near the Cabot-Koppers site and are open to reassessing the need for additional work should further information indicate that it is warranted. If you or others on the county commission have additional questions or need further clarification, please contact Lynn Wilder at (770) 488-3688 or LWilder@cdc.gov. I hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,



Thomas R. Frieden, M.D., M.P.H.
Director, Centers for Disease Control and
Prevention, and
Administrator, ATSDR

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