

Update for Stephen Foster Neighborhood

June 2011

Koppers Hazardous Waste Site

Florida DOH Releases Four New Reports – Now Available

Report on additional off-site surface soil tests

Report reviewing cancer data

Final Report on Springstead and Hogtown creek sediments

Plus a Report on the safety of eating homegrown chicken eggs

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 give people facts from scientific studies on toxic chemicals to help them learn how to stay safe. If we find a health threat, we make sure people who live nearby know about it right away.

About the Koppers Site

The Koppers hazardous waste site is near the intersection of Northwest 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. 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 west of Koppers in the Stephen Foster neighborhood are concerned site chemicals in the soil, indoor dust in their homes or chemicals in creek sediments might affect their health.

Findings in a New Florida DOH Report on Additional Soil Tests

Based on September 2010 Surface Soil tests in Stephen Foster neighborhood yards and areas north, east, and south of the site, Florida DOH and ATSDR conclude that incidental ingestion (swallowing) very small amounts of contaminated surface soil in tested yards and other areas near the site is not expected to cause non-cancer illness in children or adults. Incidental ingestion of very small amounts of this soil over a lifetime is, however, at a "low to very low" increased theoretical risk of cancer.

Florida DOH and ATSDR cannot currently conclude whether exposure to surface dust inside Stephen Foster homes could harm people's health. The information needed to make a decision is not available. Claims of dioxin-contaminated dust in area homes have not been adequately documented or validated.

The Florida DOH and ATSDR ask for public comment on the new soil data report –

Please send your comments by August 8, 2011.

Get a copy of the new soil report online at:

www.myfloridaeh.com/medicine/superfund/pha.htm

Or call us toll-free at 877-798-2772

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

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

Findings in a New Florida DOH Cancer Review Report

Based on a review of all cancers from 1981-2000, Florida DOH concludes there is no increased rates for any of the reported cancers for the Stephen Foster neighborhood and census tract 3, Alachua County. Further analysis of cancer records for the period 2000-2008 is recommended once detailed census tract data becomes available later in 2011.

Findings in a New Florida DOH Report on Homegrown Chicken Eggs

In April 2011, Florida DOH released a health report on homegrown eggs tested for dioxins in the Stephen Foster neighborhood on Springstead Creek about 1/4 mile northwest of the site. The Florida DOH concluded that the level of dioxins in eggs from home-raised chickens near the Koppers site is not likely to cause any non-cancer illness. The risk of cancer could increase slightly (from very low to low) over 35 years, depending on how many eggs someone eats per week with dioxins at levels found in the testing.

Findings in Florida DOH's Final Report on Springstead and Hogtown Creek Sediments

Florida DOH cannot conclude if past (1979-2006) incidental ingestion (swallowing) of very small amounts of dioxin contaminated sediments in off-site ditches, Springstead Creek, or Hogtown Creek downstream of the Cabot Carbon-Koppers site could have harmed people's health since sediments were not tested at that time for dioxins. Florida DOH concludes that although in the past (1979-2006) the highest levels of arsenic and PAHs in sediments in off-site ditches, Springstead Creek, and Hogtown Creek were above ATSDR cancer screening guidelines, incidental ingestion (swallowing) of very small amounts of dioxins in creek sediments is not expected to have harmed people's health. Future incidental ingestion (swallowing) of dioxins in creek sediments is also not expected to harm health.

Overall Florida DOH Recommendations

- The Health Department recommends that chickens used for homegrown eggs 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.)
- The Health Department continues to recommend area residents wash hands with soap and water after contact with bare soil.
- The Health Department continues to recommend that parents should keep their children from playing in the City easement next to the site.

Recent Florida DOH Advice for the Stephen Foster Neighborhood

- The responsible party should continue to test for dioxins in Stephen Foster neighborhood surface soil.
- The responsible party should clean up contaminated surface soil in the Stephen Foster neighborhood.
- The responsible party should clean up contaminated creek sediments in the Springstead and Hogtown Creeks.
- The responsible party should investigate/remediate contaminated dust in nearby buildings.

Future Health Activities

- Florida DOH will continue discussions with community leaders and federal/state/county agencies on a plan to test dust in homes near the site. This summer Florida DOH plans to present this plan to EPA to consider.
- Florida DOH will continue to review additional data around the Koppers site.
- Florida DOH will review cancer data from 2000- 2008 once new census information becomes available later this year.
- Florida DOH will continue to keep nearby residents up-to-date on any new findings.

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 (miller.scott@epamail.epa.gov)

**See all the Koppers site-related reports online at:
www.myfloridaeh.com/medicine/superfund/pha.htm**

