

# ***Update for Stephen Foster Neighborhood***

**December 2012**

## **Koppers Hazardous Waste Site**

### **Florida DOH Preliminary Review of Indoor Dust Testing of Nearby Homes for Dioxins**

#### ***About the Health Agencies***

The Florida Department of Health (DOH), the 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 23<sup>rd</sup> 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.

***A preliminary review of test results finds dust tested inside  
Stephen Foster homes is not an imminent health threat.***

#### ***Dust Testing Inside Stephen Foster Houses***

In May 2012, the EPA tested dust inside 17 Stephen Foster houses near the Koppers site for dioxin. EPA also tested 13 other, more distant homes for comparison.

Based on a preliminary review of the test results, Florida DOH and ATSDR find that dust inside Stephen Foster homes is not an imminent health threat.

The Florida DOH and the ATSDR are studying the dust test results to determine what, if any, health threat exists from life-long exposure. The agencies plan to release a draft health report in early 2013.

## **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:

- Report on the results of indoor dust of nearby homes.
- Review the results of additional off-site 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](mailto:phtoxicology@doh.state.fl.us)**

**Or get them online at the ACHD website at: [www.doh.state.fl.us/chdalachua/](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/chdalachua/)**

