

Update for Stephen Foster Neighborhood

Koppers Hazardous Waste Site

June 2010

Florida DOH recommends dust suppression and publishes a second report on soil tested along Stephen Foster roads

About the Health Agencies

The central office of the Florida Department of Health (DOH), the DOH Alachua County Health Department (CHD), and the US Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) work jointly to serve the public. We are quick to respond with public health actions when needed. We provide trusted health knowledge about toxic chemicals at hazardous waste sites. If we find a health threat is occurring or is likely to happen, we make sure people who live nearby know about it right away.

About the Koppers Site

The Koppers hazardous waste site is near the crossroads of North 23rd Avenue and North Main Street in Gainesville. Since 1916, Koppers site owners treated power poles and timber with chemicals to prevent decay. Past waste disposal caused chemicals to enter the soil and groundwater.

In 1984, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) added the Cabot-Koppers site to the National Priorities List (NPL). Later EPA discovered chemicals in soil west of the site. In 1989, Florida DOH reviewed soil testing data and found the site to be a potential health risk. Florida DOH recommended warning signs, further testing, and keeping people off the site.

Residents in the Stephen Foster neighborhood west of Koppers are concerned about contact with chemicals in soil. They also want to know if chemicals in sediments of creeks that drain the site might harm health.

On May 15, 2009, the Alachua CHD advised Stephen Foster neighborhood residents near the border with Koppers not to let their children play in the City easement next to the site. That Health Department Advisory remains in effect: **Parents should still keep children from playing in the City of Gainesville easement along the western edge of the Koppers site until the soil is cleaned up.**

In June 2009, the Florida DOH and the Alachua CHD sponsored an open house for residents to learn more about the area's soil tests. In August 2009, the Florida DOH and ATSDR released the first health report reviewing the soil tests. Now a second report on additional soil sampling along roads in the neighborhood is available.

Dust Suppression

In the next year, the party in charge of cleanup (Beazer East, Inc.) will plow the site and grow vegetation to keep dust from blowing off the site. The Florida DOH recommends they take steps to avoid dust from going into the neighborhood during this work. Florida DOH recommends watering the soil during plowing to keep down the dust. Florida DOH recommends proactive watering to prevent dust formation upfront, rather than monitoring for dust and watering after the fact.

Second Stephen Foster Soil Report

In a second health report reviewing soil tested along Stephen Foster roads in June and December 2009, Florida DOH concludes that contact with the tested surface soil may cause a very low increased risk of all cancers and is unlikely to cause non-cancer illness.

Florida DOH also concludes the party in charge of cleanup (Beazer East, Inc.) needs to take more surface soil tests to see how much the site has contaminated the neighborhood, as well as how far from the site nearby it has impacted the soil. Florida DOH recommends this additional testing should include Stephen Foster yards.

***The second Florida DOH report on June/December 2009 soil tests in the Stephen Foster neighborhood is now available at:
www.myfloridaeh.com/medicine/superfund/pha.htm
(Scroll down to Cabot Carbon/Koppers to see the report)
Or call toll-free 877-798-2772 to request a copy***

Future Health Activities

- Florida DOH is analyzing Springstead and Hogtown creek sediment data. In July, Florida DOH will seek public comment on a draft report.
- Florida DOH will review additional Stephen Foster neighborhood surface soil tests.
- Florida DOH epidemiologists are reviewing the Florida Cancer Data System for the neighborhood.

For More Information

About health:

- Randy Merchant, Florida Department of Health: toll-free 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:

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

Please share this information with your neighbors!



Name _____
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