



Parker Street Waste Site

U.S. EPA | ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AT EPA NEW ENGLAND

EPA NEW ENGLAND'S ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROGRAM

works to protect all people, regardless of race, color, national origin or income, from environmental harms and risks, and to involve all citizens in making decisions that affect their environment. The program is designed to achieve environmental and public health improvements for communities disproportionately burdened by the impacts of pollution.



SITE DESCRIPTION:

The currently estimated 114-acre Parker Street Waste Site is located in northwestern New Bedford, Massachusetts. Historical use of this area include the disposition of various waste materials prior to it being redeveloped for other land use purposes, such as residential and commercial structures; the location of a high school and middle school; and public housing. Through the Superfund removal program, EPA began working with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) in 2009 to define the boundaries of the site. In April 2010, after a sampling plan was developed and concurred upon by community leaders, EPA's removal program began taking soil samples to determine the extent of contamination and to determine whether a removal action is necessary.

SAMPLING AND CLEANUP:

The primary goals of the current EPA and MassDEP investigations are to: (1) confirm the perimeter of the Parker Street Waste Site (the areas or footprint where there is known to be contamination associated with the site), and (2) develop a plan to address contamination and ensure that levels of contaminants that may impact health are reduced or eliminated.

EPA and MassDEP conducted Phase I soil sampling in spring of 2010. Sampling analysis and risk evaluations conducted for Phase I showed the presence of elevated levels of contaminants in surface soils at some properties, warranting response actions. In the fall of 2010, EPA, MassDEP, and a representative from either Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry or Massachusetts Department of Public Health/Bureau of Environmental Health discussed the Phase I sampling data with individual property owners and provided explanatory materials. The agencies hosted availability sessions for residents of local housing complexes.

EPA's response effort is being conducted pursuant to the National Contingency Plan (NCP) and also complies with the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (MCP). The MCP requires elimination or control of hazards when contaminants of concern are found within soils near the surface.

The regulations also prohibit any activities by property owners that could disrupt contaminated soils until the contamination has been adequately addressed. EPA began removing contaminated soil from five properties in early November 2010 and completed soil excavations in January 2011. EPA will address additional properties in the spring of 2011.

Beginning in mid-September 2010, EPA and MassDEP conducted a second round of soil samples, Phase II, along the southern and southeastern perimeters of the Parker Street Waste Site. Phase II sampling was completed in October 2010, and analysis of the sampling results is ongoing. Phase II results will be shared with individual property owners in early spring of 2011. Based on the results of Phase II sampling, the agencies will determine whether there is a need for additional sampling to identify the final footprint of the contamination.

EPA has funded three separate Technical Assistance Services for Communities (TASC) projects to assist New Bedford citizens, including: helping establish an educational network related to environmental justice issues; providing independent technical advisors; and producing a series of Community Update documents. More information on the TASC program can be found at www.epa.gov/superfund/community/tasc.

KEY CONTACTS:

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