



San Gabriel Valley Area 1 Superfund Site

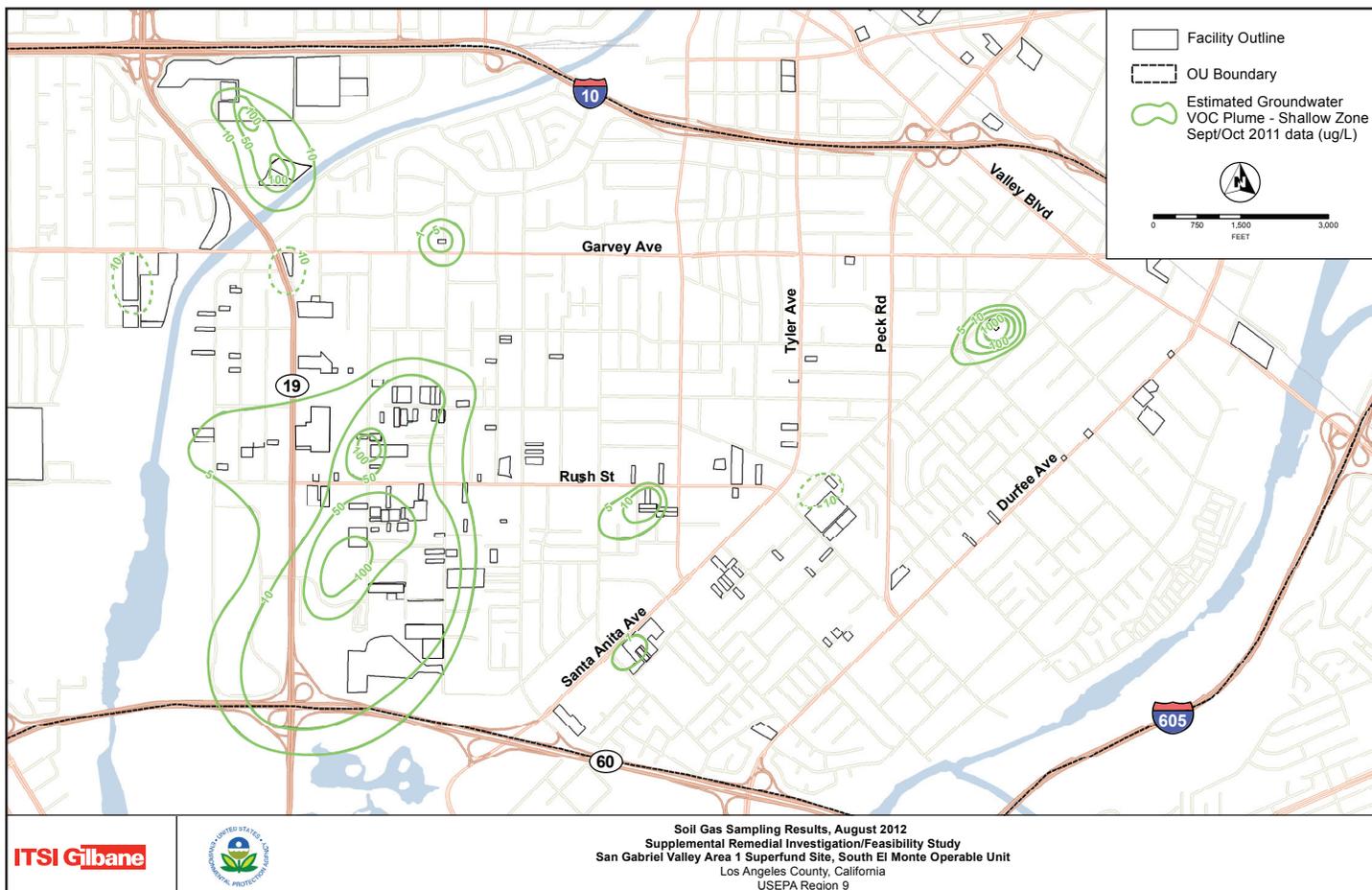
South El Monte Operable Unit (SEMOU)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency • Region 9 • San Francisco, CA • September 2013

Indoor air sampling in the South El Monte area

The EPA is conducting indoor air sampling in your neighborhood to evaluate the potential for vapor intrusion. The purpose of the testing is to ensure there are no potential long-term health concerns. EPA is asking owners and tenants for permission to sample the air inside residences and businesses near areas with contamination in the ground. EPA plans to begin air sampling in September 2013 and will conduct additional analysis if the levels of the initial study indicate vapor intrusion is occurring in this area.

Based on the air testing results, EPA will determine the appropriate next steps. Due to privacy concerns, EPA will not publicly disclose the individual home results with the general public. However, the indoor air results for each home will be shared with each individual homeowner and resident and a summary of the data will be made publicly available. EPA is conducting a Remedial Investigation (RI) for the entire SEMOU and plans to propose additional remedial actions in the next few years.



What is vapor intrusion?

Vapor intrusion refers to a process where vapors produced by a chemical spill or leak make their way into indoor air. When high concentrations of volatile contaminants are spilled or leak, they have the capacity to turn into gas or vapor and travel through the soil away from the source of contamination. These vapors can then enter a building through cracks in the foundation or a basement with a dirt floor. EPA conducted soil gas sampling in 2011 and 2012 at known sources of contamination in the SEMOU. The soil gas sample results indicate levels of volatile chemicals that have the potential to migrate into overlying buildings through vapor intrusion. It is important to know that the shallow contaminated groundwater in the area is not used as a drinking water source or for any other household uses.

Site Background

The SEMOU is part of the San Gabriel Valley Area 1 Superfund Site, and addresses contaminated groundwater under the cities of South El Monte, El Monte, and Rosemead. The groundwater contamination is the result of decades of poor chemical handling and disposal practices by hundreds of industrial facilities. The primary chemical contaminants in the Site's groundwater are tetrachloroethene (PCE) and trichloroethene (TCE), both industrial solvents. Other chemicals detected in the groundwater include 1,4-dioxane, used as a stabilizer in chlorinated industrial solvents, and perchlorate, used in fire-works and rocket fuel. EPA's ongoing remedy includes extracting and treating contaminated groundwater. The treated water meets all federal and state health protective standards for drinking water.

Sampling

The planned sampling will be conducted by EPA and its contractors. The first step is a building walk-through, where EPA will select sampling locations with input from the resident or business. Samples will be taken of indoor air, crawl space air, sub-slab soil gas, and/or outdoor air. If sub-slab sampling is required, the sampling would include drilling one or more temporary holes of about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch diameter to collect samples. Air samples are collected in canisters approximately the size of a basketball that are left in place for up to 24 hours. They do not move and do not make noise, and EPA will work with residents and businesses to establish mutually agreeable times for sampling.



Summa® canister

What if there is a vapor intrusion problem?

If indoor air sampling results from vapor intrusion exceed acceptable levels, EPA will work with the owner and/or tenant to lower the indoor air levels and to prevent the contamination from accumulating in the residence or business. EPA may recommend the installation of a vapor intrusion control system to reduce indoor air levels. With the consent of the property owner, this would generally include sealing any potential conduits and installing a sub-slab or sub-membrane vapor intrusion control system. These systems are similar to radon mitigation systems commonly installed throughout the country.

Contact information

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact EPA:

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More information is also available at:
<http://www.epa.gov/region9/SouthElMonte>



For information in Vietnamese, Spanish or Chinese please contact the number below.

Đối với thông tin trong tiếng việt, xin vui lòng liên hệ số dưới đây.

Para información en español, por favor llama al número a continuación.

有關中文信息, 請打下列電話號碼和我們聯繫。

Toll Free: 1-800-231-3075