

3. Highlights of Community Involvement Activities

3.1 Communities and General Community Involvement

A community relations plan was developed and issued by EPA in July of 1985 (EPA DCN 0639-00482). EPA issued an updated community relations plan in November of 1996 (EPA DCN 0639-02277). These plans were issued in accordance with EPA guidance to facilitate the Community involvement with respect to all Superfund actions for the Montrose Chemical and Del Amo Sites. This plan has been followed by EPA with respect to general community involvement as work at the two sites has proceeded over more than a decade.

EPA has maintained a mailing list database, which is updated on a continuous basis, and has issued fact sheets to persons and business entities on this mailing list throughout the Superfund project, which began for the Montrose Chemical Superfund site in 1983 and for the Del Amo Superfund site in 1991. As discussed earlier in this ROD, there are many aspects of the Montrose Chemical and Del Amo Superfund sites which are undergoing separate investigation and cleanup actions; groundwater is one of these actions and is being addressed in a dual-site manner. Beginning in 1983 and onward, EPA issued fact sheets to the mailing list and to any parties interested in the Superfund sites, addressing either some or all of the various actions and investigations underway. Groundwater was among these actions and investigations. These fact sheets provided the public with historical and up-to-date data and information about the sites and EPA's approach to the sites. They also encouraged the public to approach EPA with any concerns and comments they may have, and gave an opportunity to add or remove names from the mailing list.

During the period 1983 to 1993, community interest in these sites was modest. In 1993, fill material contaminated with DDT was found in residential yards along 204th Street, which were immediately adjacent to the former Del Amo waste pits. A community group, the Del Amo Action Committee, was formed at that time. Over time, this group took up the broader issues of health concerns and possible contamination throughout the wider neighborhood. Other groups and individuals with other interests and positions also existed in the community near the Montrose Chemical and Del Amo sites. Beginning in 1994, to address issues associated with the temporary relocation of some neighborhood residents and other concerns in the neighborhood, EPA substantially increased its community relations effort, including meetings and workshops monthly and as often as weekly, numerous fact sheets, special hot-lines, and media relations.

Although a majority of community involvement since 1994 has been focused on actions related to neighborhoods and neighborhood soils, EPA often "piggybacked" on these efforts (meetings,

fact sheets, etc.) to provide the community with reports on progress, data, and changes in approach with respect to the groundwater investigation and feasibility study.

In 1997, members of the community, the Del Amo Action Committee, the EPA, agencies of the State of California, and many local agencies, formed a group called the Montrose and Del Amo Neighborhood Partners, which now meets regularly. EPA provides information to this group on groundwater and has received feedback on concerns related to groundwater.

3.2 Information Repository

EPA has maintained an information repository at the Torrance and Carson public libraries with hard copies of selected critical documents related to the investigation and response actions for the Montrose Chemical Superfund site and the Del Amo Superfund site. This repository contains the administrative record for the remedial action selected by this ROD.

3.3 Community Involvement Activities **Specific to the Proposed Plan for the** **Groundwater Remedial Action Selected by this ROD**

On April 17, 1997, EPA held an informational workshop about groundwater geared to the segment of the community without substantial scientific background. EPA advertised the meeting via a flyer sent out on our mailing list. The EPA remedial project manager (RPM) and community involvement coordinator (CIC) used a computer-generated slide show, various demonstration aids, and a groundwater model as visual aids to explain: (1) the nature and operational history of the sites, (2) what groundwater is and how water moves in aquifers and aquitards, (3) the extent of contamination in each aquifer at the Joint Site¹, (4) what non-aqueous phase liquids are and how they behave, (5) why some of the groundwater cannot be cleaned up fully, (6) the approach of using a NAPL isolation zone and restoring groundwater outside that zone, (7) the concept of intrinsic biodegradation, (8) the concept of groundwater pumping for containment or for full cleanup, and (9) some possible types of generalized actions EPA might take to address the groundwater. This meeting took place prior to the release of the Joint Groundwater Feasibility Study and was designed to be a primer to help people understand the proposed plan when it was issued. Approximately 50 people attended. EPA answered questions of the community during this workshop and fielded concerns to take back into the remedy development process.

¹See Section 6 for formal definition of Joint Site.

In May 1998, the CIC approached both the Del Amo & Montrose Partnership as well as the Del Amo Land Use Community Advisory Panel and offered to provide them with additional workshops or briefings on EPA's proposed groundwater remedy prior to the Dual Site Proposed Plan Public Meeting. Neither group accepted our offer, preferring to participate at the public meeting instead.

On June 26, 1998, EPA released two versions of the *Proposed Plan; Dual Site Groundwater Operable Unit, Montrose and Del Amo Superfund Sites*. Both versions of the plan were made available in English and Spanish. One version, the general fact sheet version, was less technical and was targeted primarily at the average person. The technical and expanded version was more technical in its terminology and analysis, was much longer, and was aimed primarily at the technical community. Each version was written to serve as a stand-alone document. Any person could receive either or both versions, in either language, upon request. The following activities accompanied this release:

- The general fact sheet version was sent to the mailing list of approximately 1900 individuals, and informed them about how to receive a copy of the technical and expanded version of the proposed plan if desired;
- The general fact sheet version was made available to anyone else who requested a copy;
- The general fact sheet version was posted on the Del Amo/Montrose web site; (URL: <http://www.epa.gov/region09/waste>)
- The technical and expanded version was sent to the Montrose/Del Amo Neighborhood Partners, potentially responsible parties, their attorneys and representatives, and anyone who requested a copy;
- The availability of the fact sheet and the administrative record file, and the commencement date and duration of the public comment period, were published in a local newspaper announcement; and
- A press release was issued announcing EPA's proposal, the availability of the proposed plan and administrative record file, and the commencement and duration of the public comment period.

On July 1, 1998, the administrative record file for the Dual Site Groundwater Operable Unit was made available in the Torrance and Carson public libraries, on microfilm. Selected critical documents, including the remedial investigation reports, the Joint Groundwater Feasibility Study

(JGWFS), the Joint Groundwater Risk Assessment, and EPA's supplement to the risk assessment were made available in hard copy in the libraries.

On July 2, 1998, EPA opened a formal public comment period on the proposed plan and administrative record file. The original notice provided that the comment period would have a duration of 30 days and close on July 31, 1998. Subsequently, in response to requests by members of the public, EPA extended the public comment period by an additional 30 days, to August 30, 1998. An announcement of this change was placed in the same local newspaper which carried the original announcement. The public comment period spanned a total of 60 days. Because August 30 fell on a Sunday, EPA considered comments that were received or postmarked on or before Monday, August 31, 1998.

A formal public meeting on EPA's proposed plan and administrative record file was held during the afternoon on Saturday, July 25, 1998 at the Torrance Holiday Inn on Vermont Street. EPA presented an in-depth presentation about groundwater and EPA's proposal, using computer graphics and slides, and a highly sophisticated model with dye representing contaminants under the ground. EPA summarized the problems posed by the two sites. The information provided in the April 17, 1997 workshop was largely repeated and expanded upon. EPA answered the public's questions during and after this presentation. The EPA presentation was followed by a formal comment period. Both EPA's presentation, the questions and answers, and the formal comment period were transcribed by a court reporter. Approximately 35 people attended, including representatives of Del Amo Action Committee, the Del Amo Land Community Advisory Panel, local businesses, and other members of the general public. Comments read into the record during the formal comment portion of the public meeting were addressed by EPA prior to issuance of this ROD. EPA's responses can be found in the response summary.