



Montrose Chemical Superfund Site

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY • REGION 9 • SAN FRANCISCO, CA • NOVEMBER 2006

Update on EPA's Soil Sampling Activities

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has prepared this flier to provide you with an update on the progress of the soil sampling investigation taking place at several properties near the intersection of Torrance Boulevard and Normandie Avenue.

During July and August of 2006, soil samples were collected from the eastern portion of an industrial property, Ecology Control Industries (ECI), located at 20846 Normandie Avenue, and from the

adjacent backyards of seven residential properties located near the intersection of Torrance Boulevard and Normandie Avenue. The purpose of this sampling was to find out if chemicals historically released into the stormwater pathway from the former Montrose Chemical Corporation (Montrose) DDT manufacturing plant, located at 20201 Normandie Avenue, are present in soils on these properties by way of an historical drainage ditch (see Figure: Site Location Map).

Background

From 1947 until 1982, Montrose manufactured the pesticide DDT at its Normandie Avenue plant. DDT was periodically released from the Montrose property into a stormwater pathway; the pathway flowed

across Normandie Avenue and continued along the west side of Kenwood Avenue to Torrance Boulevard. South of Torrance Boulevard, the pathway continued through what is now the ECI property and portions of the backyards of seven adjacent residential properties. The pathway then turned eastward, broadening into an area of sloughs and wetlands. Beginning in 1969, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works installed a large concrete box drain to convey stormwater. Following construction, and as the area was developed, the sides and top of the box drain were covered with soil and fill.

In the spring of 2005, the owner of the ECI property conducted soil sampling at that property to prepare it for possible sale. Some soil samples from the eastern part

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AT A GLANCE

Although the EPA has not yet completed its evaluation of all of the sampling data, we would like to share a brief summary of our findings to date.

Preliminary Findings:

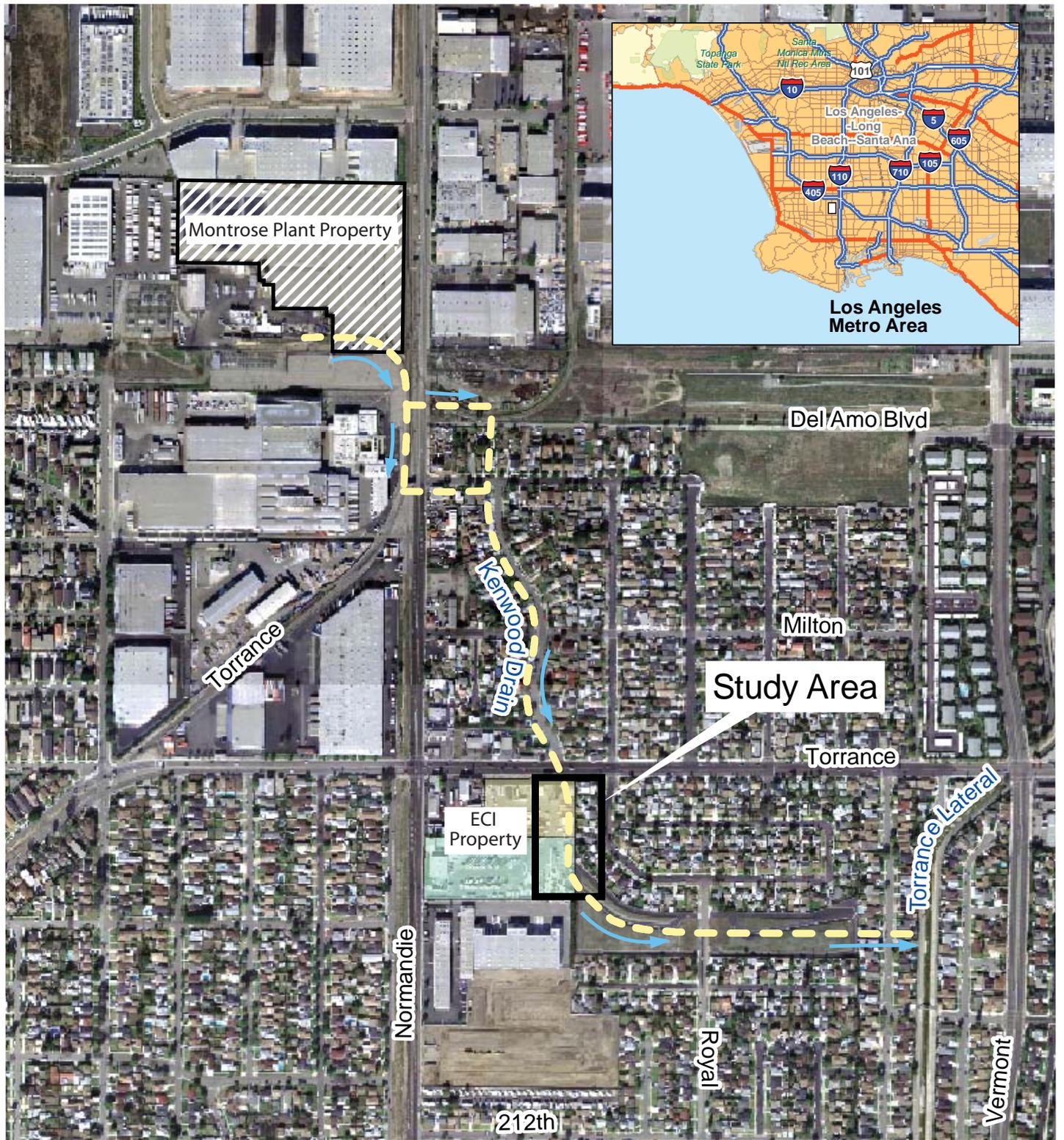
Shallow soil (from ground surface to five-feet below ground surface [bgs]) – DDT levels detected in shallow soil samples were consistent with the regional background range for this area (see Background levels, below). EPA's screening risk evaluation found that the shallow soils at the residential properties are safe for residential activities.

Deep soil (from 12 to 20 feet bgs) – soil samples from some deeper locations contained levels of DDT that were above the regional background range. The specific locations and depths where elevated DDT soil concentrations were found appear to be associated with the historical drainage ditch. **Until EPA has fully evaluated soils data from the sampled properties, EPA has requested that soils deeper than five feet bgs on these properties not be disturbed.**

What's Next:

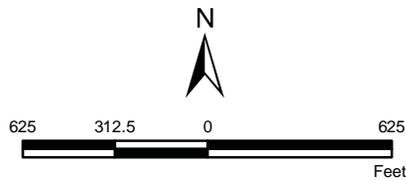
EPA is requiring Montrose to conduct additional soil sampling at the ECI Property in order to better define the areas where elevated DDT levels were found. **EPA does not expect to conduct additional sampling at the residential properties.**

EPA is continuing its evaluation which will include: completing the review and validation of the analytical data; analyzing how detected chemicals are distributed in soil; and, completing a full risk assessment for the residential properties to determine the next steps.



LEGEND

-  Former Montrose Plant Property
-  Lot 1 of 20846 Normandie Ave
-  Lot 2 of 20846 Normandie Ave
-  Study Area
-  Surface Water Runoff Pathway From Montrose Property (Source: EPA, 1998)



SITE LOCATION MAP

SOIL INVESTIGATION FOR
 HISTORICAL STORMWATER PATHWAY - SOUTH
 MONTROSE CHEMICAL SUPERFUND SITE
 LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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of the ECI property contained elevated concentrations of DDT, several other pesticides, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). EPA believes the elevated levels of DDT found in soil at the ECI property originated from the former Montrose plant property and were transported there by way of the historical stormwater pathway.

Summary of Sampling Activities

Soil samples were collected in July and August 2006 at nearly 40 locations from the eastern portion of ECI by Montrose, with oversight by EPA. Within the seven adjacent residential backyards, samples were collected at over 50 locations by EPA. Soil samples were collected from different depths, starting from the ground surface and continuing to approximately 24 feet bgs, depending on the location.

The soil samples were analyzed for selected pesticides, including DDT, and for polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) which were historically used for several purposes including for heat insulation in electrical transformers.

The laboratories have completed analysis of the soil samples, and the data are now going through data validation. Data validation, which is an extensive review process that checks the accuracy and quality of the laboratory results, is expected to be completed later this year. This summary of data results is based on interim, partially validated data, and may be revised or qualified by the completion of the data validation process.

Background levels

In a prior EPA investigation to evaluate background levels, DDT was found in the Southern Los Angeles area at low levels, averaging 1.8 parts per million (ppm) and ranging up to 10 ppm. Concentrations of DDT up to 10 ppm are considered to be consistent with the regional background range for the Southern Los Angeles area.

WHAT WE FOUND

Preliminary soil sampling data for both the ECI property and the residential properties show similar findings.

The ECI Property:

Sampling results for shallow soil samples at ECI were repeatedly below 10 ppm. These results are consistent with the regional background range found in this area. Only one sample at the ECI property collected in the upper 5 feet, from 2- to 5- feet bgs, exceeded 10 ppm; this sample contained 25 ppm of DDT.

Deeper soils along the historical drainage ditch were found to contain elevated levels of DDT. In the area of the historical ditch, some soil samples from 8 to 24 feet bgs at the ECI property were found to contain elevated DDT levels which were well above 10 ppm.

Other pesticides and PCBs were periodically detected in ECI property soil samples at all depths. These other chemicals, found in less than 5 percent of the samples collected, were detected at levels that exceeded EPA's screening criteria and require further evaluation of the ECI property.

Residential properties:

The concentrations of DDT, which were found in the shallow soils of residential backyards are consistent with regional background levels of DDT. In the seven residential properties, DDT levels in soil samples collected from the ground surface to five-foot bgs were repeatedly below 10 ppm, which is consistent with the regional background range for this area. Only one sample, collected from 2- to 5-foot bgs, slightly exceeded 10 ppm of DDT at 12 ppm, still within the acceptable risk range.

Based on the risk evaluation of chemicals found in the shallow soils, the backyards are safe for residential activities. EPA did a screening level risk evaluation of the chemicals that were found in shallow soil at each of the seven residential properties (for both the upper two feet of soil and the upper five feet of soil) to identify any potential human health risks. The screening risk estimates for shallow soils in these residential backyards were below or at the lowest (safest) end of the EPA risk range and the residents of these properties can continue to use their backyards for residential activities (e.g., gardening, playing, etc.).

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Some of the deeper soil samples contained elevated levels of DDT. Elevated levels of DDT were found in some deeper soil samples, particularly those samples that were deeper than 12 feet bgs and in the area of the historical stormwater pathway. EPA has requested that residential soils deeper than five feet bgs not be disturbed until EPA has completed its risk assessment. For example, residents should avoid installing an in-ground swimming pool, or digging or drilling to install a building foundation.

NEXT STEPS

Based on the sampling results collected from the ECI Property, Montrose will be preparing a sampling plan to conduct additional soil sampling. This additional sampling is needed to better define the areas at ECI where elevated concentrations of chemicals were found.

Following the additional soil sampling at the ECI Property, and once the data validation process is complete, EPA and Montrose will prepare investigation reports, which will present the soil sampling results for all of the properties that were sampled. EPA will also use the validated data to conduct a full risk assessment for the seven residential properties. This risk assessment will be used to determine whether a person might be exposed to any chemicals present and provide a comprehensive evaluation of the potential risks which could be associated with such an exposure. Once completed, the sampling reports and risk assessment will be made available to the public at the EPA information repositories listed below.

As we progress in our evaluation, EPA will keep you informed with updated information.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE MONTROSE SUPERFUND SITE:

 EPA's website (Scroll down and select Site Overviews/Montrose Chemical Corporation):

<http://www.epa.gov/region09/waste/sfund/superfundsites.html>

EPA's Information Repositories

Many of the Montrose Site reports, fact sheets, and other related documents can be viewed at:



Torrance Civic Center Library

3301 Torrance Boulevard
Torrance, CA
310-618-5959



Carson Public Library

151 E. Carson Street
Carson, CA
310-830-0901

To REACH Us:

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