



Moffett Field,  
California

# Moffett Community Housing UPDATE No. 8 Air Sampling Results



November 2004

## Introduction

The U.S. Navy has been studying air quality at Moffett Community Housing, which includes Orion Park and Wescoat Housing, in Mountain View, California. In November 2003 and May 2004, the Navy collected air samples in and around the housing area to evaluate potential health risks to residents from three airborne chemicals.

This update provides the combined results of the November 2003 and May 2004 air sampling activities. Based on the two sampling events and previous studies, the Navy has consistently concluded that there are no immediate or short-term health risks to Moffett Community Housing residents from trichloroethene (TCE) or its breakdown products in the air.

## Why the Navy is Conducting These Studies

The Navy initiated investigations at Moffett Community Housing because chemicals known as volatile organic compounds (VOCs), including TCE, were found in the

groundwater. The groundwater under Moffett Community Housing is not used for drinking, irrigation or other household purposes. For this reason, the VOCs in the groundwater do not pose a health risk through ingestion, bathing or other contact. The water used in the housing areas comes from the Hetch Hetchy reservoir in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and is treated to meet all state and federal drinking water standards.

Because VOCs evaporate easily, there is a possibility that they could be moving from the groundwater through the soil, as a gas, into the air. There are also other potential sources of VOCs in the air, besides groundwater. For example, VOCs can be found in homes where household products like spray cleaners and adhesives are commonly used.

Air sampling conducted by the Navy in 2002 found VOCs in the indoor and outdoor air at Moffett Community Housing. The 2002 study also found that there were no immediate or short-term health risks to the residents or their families from TCE in the air or groundwater at Moffett Community Housing.

**Based on the November 2003 and May 2004 sampling events, the Navy has found that there are no immediate or short-term health risks to Moffett Community Housing residents from TCE or its breakdown products in the air**

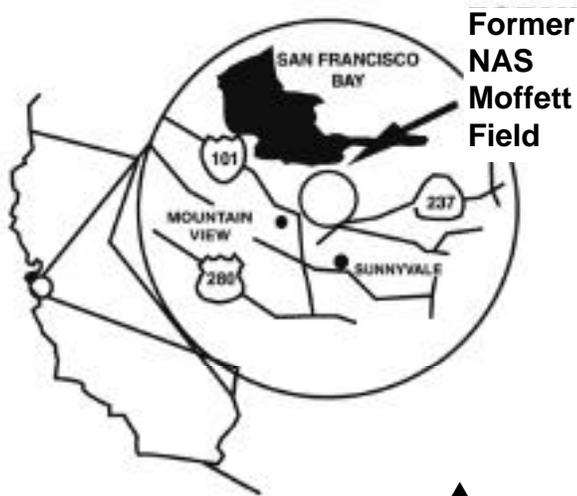


Figure 1

## Summary of Air Sampling Procedures

Indoor and outdoor air samples were collected from the day care center and 21 vacant units in Orion Park, three vacant

units in Wescoat Housing and ten outdoor locations, including playgrounds and other common areas. Prior to sampling, each housing unit was aired out for 24 hours and then sealed off for another 48 hours to ensure that only air from inside the unit was collected. A certified laboratory analyzed the samples for the following chemicals:

- TCE – used mainly as a solvent to remove grease from metal parts; also in adhesives, paint removers, typewriter correction fluids, and spot removers/dry cleaning solutions
- DCE – commonly used in solvents and produced as TCE breaks down
- Vinyl chloride – produced as TCE breaks down

## Conclusions

Results from the November 2003 and May 2004 air sampling showed low levels of TCE in all indoor and outdoor samples, including areas where TCE was not found in groundwater.

### **The sampling results indicated that:**

- **There were no housing units that had consistent detections greater than long-term federal or California state health-based concentrations.**
- **TCE detections were consistently below health-based concentrations in all but 3 housing units sampled. Of these three units, one no longer exists and the other two are vacant.**
- **DCE detections were all below health-based concentrations.**
- **Vinyl chloride was detected in only one outdoor sample. The detection was above the health-based concentration.**
- **There is no apparent correlation between air sampling results and the presence (or absence) of groundwater contamination.**
- **Volatile chemicals in the housing units were detected at low concentrations, similar to the concentrations detected in the surrounding air.**

The May 2004 sampling results verify the findings of previous studies at Moffett Community Housing –

***There are no immediate or short-term health risks to the residents from indoor or outdoor air quality.***

## What's Next

The Draft Air Sampling Report for Orion Park and Wescoat Housing areas is currently being reviewed by regulatory agencies. The report is also available for review by residents and other interested parties at the Mountain View Public Library, 585 Franklin Street, Mountain View, California.

Keeping the public involved and informed is an important part of this project. The Navy's project team is dedicated to developing and maintaining open communication with the residents at Moffett Community Housing and the surrounding communities. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the following project team members:

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**All plans and reports related to the Navy's groundwater and air quality studies at Moffett Community Housing are available daily for your review at the Mountain View Public Library, 585 Franklin Street, Mountain View, California. For more information on the environmental work underway at Moffett Field, log onto [www.efds.w.navy.mil/environmental/moffett.htm](http://www.efds.w.navy.mil/environmental/moffett.htm)**