



Moffett Community Housing

Moffett Field, California

April 2001

Groundwater Update

Introduction

This fact sheet presents information about groundwater investigation activities underway at Moffett Community Housing. Moffett Community Housing is located near the city of Mountain View, California and Moffett Federal Airfield, north of Highway 101. Groundwater beneath some of the areas within Moffett Community Housing has been found to contain chemical contaminants, primarily trichloroethene and 1,1,1-trichloroethane. This groundwater is not used for drinking water, so there is no risk to people through ingestion or contact. The Navy plans to conduct tests to find out the nature and extent of chemical contamination in groundwater under the housing areas. The Navy also plans to conduct studies to make sure that the chemicals do not pose a health risk to people living in Moffett Community Housing. The Navy will look at possible cleanup solutions if they are needed.

Public involvement is a very important part of the environmental process. The project team is very interested in forming and keeping an open relationship with the residents living in the housing area and surrounding communities. Please feel free to contact the persons listed on the back of this fact sheet for more information.

Current Environmental Activities

Chemical contaminants have been found in groundwater under the Wescoat Housing area of Moffett Community Housing. These contaminants may have traveled from nearby Superfund sites, the Middlefield Road-Ellis Street-Whisman Road (MEW) site and/or the Naval Air Station

Preliminary evaluations indicate that the chemicals in groundwater do not pose a risk to residents at Moffett Community Housing.

Moffett Field site. Groundwater treatment systems are in place at these sites and cleanup is being performed under a Record of Decision.

In addition, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) met with the Air Force in December 1999 to inform them that NASA had detected chemicals in groundwater wells during routine groundwater monitoring. These wells were located on NASA property near the Orion Park housing area of Moffett Community Housing. NASA also conducted environmental sampling within the northeastern portion of Orion Park in 1999. Test results showed that chemicals were present in the groundwater under this area of Orion Park. Based on this information, the Navy sampled the groundwater in 2000. Results of this sampling confirmed the presence of acetone, benzene, 1,2-dichloroethene, toluene, xylenes, and trichloroethene in groundwater under some areas of Orion Park. The source and extent of chemicals in groundwater under Orion Park is currently unknown. The Navy plans to conduct more tests to

find out this information and to determine whether chemicals in groundwater have traveled to any other areas of Moffett Community Housing.

The chemicals identified in groundwater are used as industrial cleaners (solvents) to remove grease from metal parts and in dry cleaning activities. Some of these chemicals are used in household cleaning products.

Preliminary evaluations indicate that the chemicals in groundwater do not pose a risk to residents at Moffett Community Housing. Moffett Community Housing does not use the groundwater for drinking water, so the chemicals do not pose

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a risk to people through ingestion or contact. The Navy has evaluated the highest levels of chemicals in the groundwater to determine their potential to travel into indoor air. Results indicate that there is little potential for the chemicals to be present in the indoor air at concentrations that might present a risk to residents. However, the Navy intends to more fully evaluate the extent of chemicals in the groundwater and determine the potential for risk to human health.

NASA has provided information indicating that the chemicals in groundwater could travel through the soil into the air. As part of redevelopment studies within Moffett Federal Airfield, NASA recently sampled indoor air at several buildings. These buildings were not located within Moffett Community Housing and were previously used as warehouses and offices. Results of the indoor air sampling indicated that some of these buildings contained chemicals in the indoor air that could potentially pose a risk to human health if continuously exposed over the course of 20 years. Past building uses may be the source of chemicals in the air. However, groundwater under the buildings tested also may have contributed to or been the source of chemicals in the indoor air. Several factors affect the potential for chemicals to travel from groundwater into the air. These include the depth to groundwater, the concentrations of chemicals in groundwater, and whether the building floor slab is cracked or intact.

The chemicals identified in groundwater at this site are used in dry cleaning activities or as industrial cleaners (solvents) to remove grease from metal parts. Some of these chemicals are used in household cleaning products.

Open House

The Navy is inviting the public to an open house on May 3rd, 2001 from 7 to 9 p.m. to share information about Moffett Community Housing groundwater activities. Information regarding the location of the open house will be mailed at a later date. Additional meetings may be held as new information develops.

What's Next

The Navy is moving forward with plans for more studies at Moffett Community Housing. Workplans for these studies will be prepared in Summer 2001. The community and regulators will have the opportunity to review and comment on the workplans. Sampling of groundwater, soil, and air is planned to occur in December 2001. The community will be notified before the sampling occurs. Large portable drilling rigs will be used to drill beneath the ground surface to get samples of the groundwater. Traffic in the sampling area may be impacted.

The sampling results will be used to determine the potential health risk to residents in the area. A draft report presenting the results of the investigation will be prepared in Spring 2002 and provided to Moffett Community Housing residents.

Project Points of Contact

The project team is very interested in hearing from you. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact one of the people named here.

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