



El Dorado Hills Naturally Occurring Asbestos Assessment

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY • REGION 9 • SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA • NOVEMBER 2005

El Dorado Community Update

On May 6, 2005, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) conducted a community meeting to share the results of its sampling at three schools and a community park in El Dorado Hills. At the same meeting, the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) presented the findings of its Health Consultation prepared for asbestos exposures at Oak Ridge High School. An estimated 1,000 people attended the meeting, which included nearly three hours of questions and answers. The following day, U.S. EPA and ATSDR held an availability session to talk one-on-one with community members. An estimated 200 people attended the session.

During the meetings, the community learned about the results of U.S. EPA's sampling effort, which showed that engaging in sports and play activities in the areas tested can expose individuals participating in those activities to significantly elevated levels of amphibole asbestos. These exposures are of public health concern because of the potential for long-term development of asbestos-related diseases, including cancer.

The ATSDR Health Consultation for Oak Ridge High School concluded that the cleanup actions conducted by the school district and U.S. EPA had minimized current exposures but that exposures to amphibole asbestos had probably occurred in the past. ATSDR recommended that individuals in the most highly exposed groups (coaches, outdoor maintenance staff, and student athletes) inform their physician about the potential asbestos exposure so they can receive preventative care and be watched for early signs of disease.

Both U.S. EPA and ATSDR encouraged the community and local and state governments to work together to reduce exposures, because reducing exposures reduces the risk of asbestos-related disease.

Current Status of U.S. EPA Activities

At the public meeting and in subsequent discussions with community members and government officials, U.S. EPA received information and comments which caused us to modify our activities. The activities we will be conducting are detailed below. We believe that the new focus will be more responsive to the community and will better further our goal of protecting the public from exposures to naturally occurring asbestos (NOA).

- **Risk Assessment Modeling** - In response to strong public interest, U.S. EPA will provide numerical risk information on the asbestos exposures measured during sports and play activities at Silva Valley Elementary School, Rolling Hills Middle School, Jackson Elementary School, and the Community Park. U.S. EPA will work with ATSDR, the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), and El Dorado County to develop activity scenarios and associated exposure assumptions. We will then use these values to generate numerical estimates of the potential health risks. We hope that this will help the community put the asbestos risks in context. U.S. EPA expects that our risk assessment will be completed by early next year.
- **ATSDR Health Consultation** - ATSDR is currently evaluating the U.S. EPA data collected from Silva Valley Elementary School, Rolling Hills Middle School, Jackson School, and the Community Park and will produce a Health Consultation similar to the report prepared for the exposure at Oak Ridge High School. ATSDR is currently planning to have the Health Consultation peer-reviewed by experts on asbestos and health.

Originally, U.S. EPA was going to convene a national panel of health experts to help the community understand the significance of the elevated exposures by providing independent experts to interpret the exposure data. However, this effort would duplicate the ATSDR Health Consultation and our plan to provide numerical risk information. U.S. EPA has decided that coordinating these activities will achieve the objectives of the expert panel in a more timely and responsive manner. Therefore, we have decided not to pursue the national panel.

- **State and Local Agency Coordination** - U.S. EPA will continue to work with the agencies of CalEPA (Department of Toxic Substances Control, Air Resources Board, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment), and local Air Pollution Control Districts to identify possible enhancements to existing asbestos regulations and to discuss improvements in regulation and NOA identification and control.
- **El Dorado County Coordination** - U.S. EPA will continue to assist the County, as requested, to review and comment on asbestos control regulations and provide technical assistance. U.S. EPA is also providing more than \$50,000 to El Dorado County to purchase equipment to facilitate NOA inspections and to conduct NOA public training for contractors, developers, landscapers, homebuilders, and members of the public.
- **Technical Assistance** - U.S. EPA will continue to work with schools, parks, and other regulatory agencies, including the California Department of Toxic Substances Control, the Air Resources Board, and the California Geological Survey, to provide technical assistance regarding NOA identification, mapping, sampling, analysis, control, and mitigation.
- **State and Federal Legislation** - U.S. EPA will continue to follow NOA and asbestos legislation at the state and federal levels and will provide information to the legislators as requested.

For More Information

U.S. EPA documents are available at El Dorado County libraries

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will maintain local information repositories, with copies of documents related to our work on naturally occurring asbestos, at two branches of the El Dorado County Library:

El Dorado County Library
Oak Ridge High School branch
 1120 Harvard Way, El Dorado Hills

El Dorado County Library
Main branch
 345 Fair Lane, Placerville

Selected documents are available from the U.S. EPA's web site at <http://www.epa.gov/region09/toxic/noa>. Please contact the Superfund Records Center at 415-536-2000 to request paper copies.

Please contact the people below if you have any questions or concerns

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U.S. EPA toll-free Community Involvement message line: **(800) 231-3075**