

2015 Five-Year Review Completed

Five-Year Review Completed

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has completed the Fourth Five-Year Review of cleanup actions undertaken at the South Bay Asbestos Superfund Site (Site), in the Alviso district of San Jose, CA. EPA has found that clean up actions at the Site remain protective of human health and the environment because the major sources of asbestos exposure have been removed or are being controlled. This fact sheet summarizes the findings of the Fourth Five-Year Report completed on September 10, 2015.

The Review Process

When EPA's cleanup remedy leaves some waste in place or the remedy takes longer than five years to complete, the Superfund law requires an evaluation of the protectiveness of remedial systems every five years, until the Site has been cleaned up sufficiently to allow unrestricted access and unlimited access. The purpose of the Five-Year Review (FYR) is to evaluate the current status of the remedy, assess the effectiveness of the institutional controls, and ensure that the remedy is protective of human health and the environment.

EPA evaluated the integrity of landfill caps and barriers, and changes in scientific knowledge about site contaminants and exposure pathways that could affect the protectiveness of the remedy. EPA concluded the remedy at South Bay Asbestos Superfund Site is protective of human health and the environment. The risk of exposure to asbestos has been lowered to acceptable levels by removing asbestos-containing material, covering landfills with asbestos-containing material, and implementing institutional controls at landfills with asbestos-containing material.

Site History

The South Bay Asbestos Site is located in the Alviso district of San Jose, California (Figure 1). The Site was placed on the National Priorities List (NPL) in 1986 to address asbestos in the soil. Asbestos-containing soil was used to construct a ring levee to protect the low-lying areas of Alviso from flooding. In addition, Alviso landfills were thought to have received asbestos waste from an asbestos cement pipe manufacturing plant. Furthermore, local truck yards may have been contaminated with asbestos-containing soil materials from the ring levee that had blown onto the truck yards.

On September 29, 1988, EPA signed the Record of Decision (ROD) to select a remedy addressing asbestos contamination in the ring levee. Removal of the asbestos-containing flood control ring levee was completed in 1994 and removal of a temporary replacement levee was completed in 1997. Since there was no asbestos contamination left in place, the ring levee is not included in the Five-Year Review.

On September 29, 1989, EPA signed another ROD for selecting remedies to address asbestos contamination at three landfills and four truck yards. The landfills within the Site (Santos, Marshland, and Sainte Claire Landfills) contained asbestos waste from an asbestos cement pipe manufacturing plant. Since adopting the ROD, EPA has conducted and completed cleanup activities for the landfills and truck yards. As a result, EPA is only evaluating operations and maintenance of landfill caps to stabilize asbestos-containing material and land use covenants at landfills with asbestos-containing material.

A copy of the Five-Year Review Report will be placed in the local information repositories listed on page 2. EPA will continue to monitor the Site and conduct ongoing Five-Year Reviews since asbestos waste remains in place at the Site.

Site Inspection

EPA representatives conducted site inspections in February 2015. The purpose of the site inspections was to evaluate areas where asbestos waste was left in place above cleanup action levels. Since asbestos waste remains buried at the three landfill areas (Santos, Sainte Claire and Marshland), EPA inspected the condition of the existing caps. Overall, there were no problems identified with the landfill areas that could result in the release of asbestos into the air. There were no significant cracks or holes in any of the caps. The landfill sites will continue to be inspected on a regular basis.

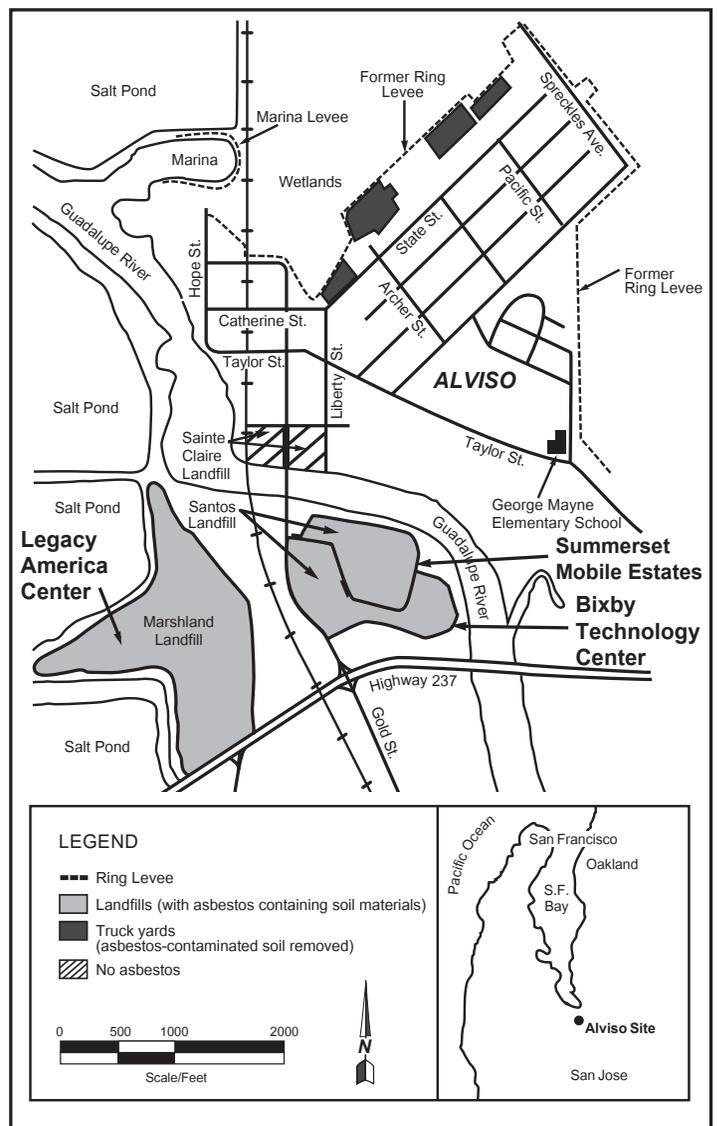


Figure 1. Site layout and location map

What is Asbestos

Asbestos is a natural mineral made of strong and very fine fibers. When asbestos is in the air we breathe, it can be a significant health threat and may cause lung cancer. In the past, asbestos was added to a variety of products to strengthen them, and to provide health insulation and fire resistance. EPA has banned or severely restricted its use in manufacturing and construction.

Cleanup Objective

The remedial action objective of the selected remedy was to control the release of asbestos and to prevent human contact with asbestos-containing material. To achieve this objective, EPA removed levees with asbestos-containing material, excavated soil containing asbestos, covered landfills with asbestos-containing material, and paved truck yards. In 2010, EPA finished activity based air quality sampling analysis at the cleaned up truck yards to understand if asbestos would affect people living near the truck yards. EPA found that there was no asbestos exposure or human health risk to nearby residents, which was confirmed in the latest Five-Year Review.

Previous Issues

EPA has addressed the following issues from the 2010 Third Five-Year Review Report.

- 1) EPA placed Land Use Covenants, which have requirements for property use and

development, on the property titles for the Summerset Mobile Estates portion of the former Santos Landfill EPA determined that a land use covenant was not needed for the Sainte Claire Landfill based on the 2011 Explanation of Significant Differences (ESD) since it does not contain asbestos.

- 2) EPA prepared a 2011 ESD that specifies no further institutional controls, or restrictions on land use, are needed at the Marshland Landfill since the use of existing Water Board requirements and the CalRecycle Titles 14 and 27 regulations meet the deed restriction requirements in the ROD.

Issues & Recommendations in the 2015 Fourth Five-Year Review Report

No issues that affect protectiveness of the remedy were noted during this FYR.

The following recommendations to ensure proper operation of the remedy and continued protectiveness were identified during the Five-Year Review:

- 1) Assess the need for additional work, not specified in the ROD around the vacant lot and unpaved truck yard where recent soil disturbance was found.
- 2) Based on the observations during the site inspection, some asphalt parking lots and driveways require repair and maintenance. These activities will ensure that the remedy is maintained over time.
- 3) The Legacy America Center Soil Management Plan update and landfill cap inspection report, Summerset Mobile Estates landfill cap inspection report, and Bixby Technology Center landfill cap inspection report should be submitted by the specific dates outlined in the Five-Year Review Report.

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EPA South Bay Asbestos Superfund Site

Community Involvement

EPA is interested in hearing from the public. If you have any issues or concerns about the South Bay Asbestos Site's cleanup plan, EPA would like to talk with you. Please contact Grace Ma or Carlin Hafiz. If you would like to be included in our postal mailing list and receive future fact sheets, please contact Carlin Hafiz.

For More Information

Please visit the South Bay Asbestos web site at www.epa.gov/region9/SouthBayAsbestos. Or visit the information repositories below to review the site documents or contact EPA representatives:

Information Repository

San Jose Public Library
Alviso Branch
1060 Taylor Street
Alviso, CA 95002

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