



San Francisco City and County
Department of Public Health
Environmental Health Section

Gavin Newsom, Mayor
Mitchell H. Katz, *Director of Health*

Rajiv Bhatia, M.D., M.P.H.
Director of Environmental Health

October 9, 2007

Dr. Rick Kreutzer
Chief Environmental Health Investigations Branch
Division of Environmental and Occupational Disease Control
California Department of Public Health
850 Marina Bay Parkway, Building P, Third Floor
Richmond, CA 94804

Dear Dr. Kreutzer:

On September 20, 2007, the San Francisco Department of Public Health received your assessment of hazards associated with development at Hunters Point Shipyard Parcel A in a letter from California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to the Agency for Toxic Substances Disease Registry (ATSDR). At the same time, we also received ATSDR's concurring letter.

The Department of Public Health deeply appreciates your agency's detailed review of the available air monitoring data as well as the many supportive recommendations for optimizing control of airborne dust and asbestos. We share your frank assessment of the limitations of human exposure and risk assessment in this situation, yet we are also heartened by your judgment that the risks of serious asbestos-related health impacts for community residents from development at Parcel A are likely to be low on a personal level even if those exposures were to have occurred over seven years. We also concur with your conclusions that radiological testing of residents for asbestos exposures is not recommended and blood tests for asbestos exposures do not exist.

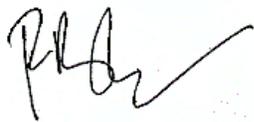
Most important, we agree that the primary goal for environmental health is preventing exposure to hazards. We believe that the pro-active regulatory controls established by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) and the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) both for naturally occurring asbestos and nuisance dust were developed to achieve precautionary and environmental justice ends. When adopted, these regulations clearly recognized asbestos from natural sources as a potential health hazard. We take very seriously our responsibility to critically review and optimize our pro-active regulatory scheme on an ongoing basis. The recommendations you have provided to us in this regard will be invaluable.

As you know, major earthmoving activities at Parcel A have ceased, and the soil on a large section of the parcel is now stabilized. Still, SFDPH has begun to move forward with a number of the CDPH recommendations anticipating ongoing development activities at the Shipyard.

At this point, we would like to share an early status report on all the CDPH recommendations (See attached table). You will note that we have already implemented some of the recommendations CDPH made in whole or part. In the near future, we would hope to take advantage of your expertise on specific technical questions.

Again, please accept my personal thanks for all of the efforts you and your staff have made on behalf of the health of San Francisco residents. Do not hesitate to contact me at 415-252-3931 if you would like to discuss the status of our efforts or if you have additional recommendations to provide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rajiv Bhatia', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Rajiv Bhatia, MD, MPH
Medical Director, Occupational and Environmental Health

Cc: Tom Sinks, ATSDR
Susan Muza, ATSDR
Amy Brownell, SFDPH
Mitch Katz, SFDPH
John Balmes, UCSF

Attachment

Status of California Department of Public Health Recommendations for Asbestos and Nuisance Dust Control at Parcel A at Hunters Point Shipyard

<p>CDPH recommendation (September 20th, 2007):</p>	<p>Status (October 9, 2007)</p>
<p>SFDPH should assign a person to continuously monitor dust production and dust abatement activities during working hours. This is an important way to prevent both dust and asbestos exposures. Essential to this recommendation is that the assigned person not only observes but has the authority to alter activity on the site based on his/her observations.</p>	<p>We agree with benefit of direct agency observation of regulatory compliance. SFDPH routinely conducts regular unannounced random site inspections to verify compliance with the Dust Control Plan, and inspectors have had the power to alter activity and stop work at the site if they observe violations of the Dust Control Plan. A recent violation of the plan resulted in a two day suspension of work activities. SFDPH has not observed dust plan violations in the vast majority of observations in the current year and no current year dust complaints from the public have been verified on inspection. Nevertheless, because continuous SFDPH presence might provide some benefit over random inspections, SFDPH will explore the mechanisms available to us for employing a full-time dust inspector while Lennar is conducting dust generating activities.</p>
<p>The assigned person should promptly report to the public on what is observed and what is done as a result of the above-mentioned monitoring activities.</p>	<p>We agree with the need for more timely public communication. SFDPH has created a website for Hunters Point development that includes: frequently asked questions; resources and referral information; the dust control plan; and Notices of Violation. Future plans are to update the status of development activities on a weekly or monthly basis. The SFDPH Hunter's Point website is accessible at: http://www.dph.sf.ca.us/eh/hunterspoint/Index.htm</p>

<p>Explore additional dust control procedures such as misting at the fence line, tarping the fence, adding an on-site meteorological station, stopping activity that generates dust if winds are 15 miles per hour or more, or tarping grounds where no activity is occurring for seven days or more. It is recommended that the developer engage someone with expertise in dust control to specifically define additional mechanisms to achieve better mitigation and dust suppression.</p>	<p>We agree that all of the listed dust control methods merit consideration and evaluation. Lennar has maintained an on-site meteorological station since the inception of the project. (See: http://clients2.engeo.com/weather/hunterspoint/) In addition, Lennar as already installed misting systems and tarping of the fence line for many areas of the site - including many, if not all, the areas adjacent to residents. We will verify these efforts and whether additional areas would merit misting or tarping. We will explore the other listed dust control procedures. Finally, SFDPH recently obtained a complete copy of historical data (temperature, humidity, wind direction, wind speed and other parameters) from the weather station and we are conducting an analysis to determine if there are any correlations between meteorological data and asbestos results at the site.</p>
<p>Air monitoring equipment on-site and in the community should be used to evaluate the effectiveness of added measures. If ongoing exceedances occur, then more measures should be adopted.</p>	<p>We agree with this recommendation. We have used in the past and will continue to use the air monitoring equipment to evaluate dust control measures. We have also, in the past, revised our dust control plans and requirements for the developer based on regulatory history. We expect to continue to use this adaptive approach in the future.</p>
<p>To assist the SFDPH assigned inspector in evaluating the current Dust Control Plan, the contractor should conduct real-time dust monitoring using appropriate equipment for respirable dust (PM-10) at several locations, co-located with asbestos sampling (SFDPH and BAAQMD). SFDPH should use information from monitors during the day to identify activities which are generating PM 10 and alter activity to reduce its generation. As explained</p>	<p>We agree with the recommendation about co-locating dust and asbestos monitoring equipment. According to our records, several of the particulate dust monitors are already co-located with several of the asbestos sampling stations. We will evaluate co-locating some of the other sampling stations. Our consultants reviewed your concerns about use of the particulate monitoring equipment and concluded the current equipment was appropriate for perimeter monitoring. We</p>

<p>below, there are validity problems with the currently used monitoring equipment.</p>	<p>are considering installation of alternative monitoring equipment on an experimental basis in order to do a side by side comparison with the current monitors. We will also investigate further with the BAAQMD and other experts to see if there is agreement on the optimal choice of equipment.</p>
<p>Include the community monitors, especially HV-7, HV-8 and HV-9, in the official asbestos monitoring plan, as regulated by the BAAQMD. These monitors, along with the on-site monitors, create better coverage of the perimeter of such a large parcel (BAAQMD).</p>	<p>We agree with this recommendation. In January 2007, SFPDH made the same request to BAAQMD. We will follow-up with them to review this issue again.</p>
<p>Explore ways to reduce the time lag between measuring elevated levels of naturally occurring asbestos and altering parcel activities by returning to 12-hour sampling (when samples often resulted in results the next day). Or, collect from 7 p.m. to 7 p.m., which would similarly mean a result may be available the next day. (BAAQMD for the on-site monitors; SFPDH for the community monitors). As a matter of principle, public agencies should try to be as timely in their feedback as possible. These sampling strategies will advance this goal.</p>	<p>We agree with this recommendation. SFPDH will be meeting with BAAQMD to review the pros and cons of 12 hour vs. 24 hour sampling and the possibility of changing the pickup time of the samples so that results can be received in time to influence the next day's activities. Please note that the samples are currently collected at 7 am and results are reported by the lab no later than 5 pm that day.</p>