



**RESULTS OF COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLING:
IN THE VICINITY OF TRONOX LLC (FORMERLY KERR MCGEE) FACILITY, COLUMBUS, MS**

Number 1

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INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conducted environmental sampling in East Columbus in April 2010. The overall sampling results are now available to the public. EPA’s goal is to keep the local community informed and engaged.



EPA personnel at a community ditch downstream from the Tronox facility

PURPOSE

EPA sampled residential yards, drainage areas and public areas adjacent to the Tronox facility for environmental contaminants, including pentachlorophenol (PCP), Benzo(a)pyrene toxicity equivalents (BaP TEQ) and dioxin. These are all contaminants associated with wood treating operations. The locations were selected by EPA technical staff, using input from community members and former workers. The purpose was to determine if these contaminants are present in the surface soil (0” to 6” inches) and sediments (which were under water).

FINDINGS

There were 25 samples taken at 24 locations, followed by laboratory analysis, a sampling report, a rigorous EPA review, and a EPA risk assessor evaluation. The results showed that some locations contained levels of contamination that are over risk screening levels.

SOIL Sampling Results ABOVE Screening Levels

| PCP | BaP—TEQ | Dioxin |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 0/15 samples | 9/15 samples | 4/15 samples |

SEDIMENT Sampling Results ABOVE Screening Levels

| PCP | BaP—TEQ | |
|--------------|--------------|--|
| 3/10 samples | 6/10 samples | |

EPA’s risk assessors point out the following:

- Screening levels are conservative risk-based values developed by EPA to help identify contaminants of potential concern.
- Screening levels are not action levels for further investigation or cleanup.

For property owners or renters whose properties were sampled, the EPA has sent out data results. From August 24-25, EPA will hold one-on-one Information Sessions to ensure the data is understood.

Partnering agencies have been invited to participate with EPA in the Information Sessions: the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), and the Mississippi Department of Health (MDH).

NEXT STEPS

Due to the recent Tronox bankruptcy, EPA can no longer effectively manage all aspects of the Tronox site under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). The federal Superfund law was created by Congress to deal with sites of industrial pollution that are associated with bankruptcy or abandonment. **Therefore, the Tronox site is being shifted to the EPA Region 4 Superfund program.** Superfund will evaluate the April sampling data and make decisions about next steps. Superfund is committed to engage the community in all aspects of the response.

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES: WHAT YOU CAN DO

Public health agencies are in the process of assessing the results. In the meantime, there are a number of simple proactive steps you can take to protect yourself and your family:

- Discourage children from playing in the ditches, eating soil and placing soiled objects into their mouths
- Make sure that children wash their hands before meals, nap time, and bedtime

INFORMATION REPOSITORY

Related materials to this sampling may be viewed at the following location: Columbus-Lowndes Library, 314 North Seventh Street Columbus, MS 39701; Phone: (662) 329-5300.



Drainage ditch along 14th Avenue North

INTERNET LINKS

Visit <http://www.epa.gov/region4/foiapg/readingroom/index.htm> as documents related to this sampling event become available.

To view information on the human health aspects of the contaminants sampled, refer to the 2-page Fact Sheets produced by ATSDR. The respective web-site pages are:

PCP <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tf.asp?id=401&tid=70>

BaP TEQ <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tf.asp?id=121&tid=25>

Dioxins <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tf.asp?id=363&tid=63>

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact the following individuals:

EPA Community Involvement

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ATSDR (Federal Health Agency)

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MDEQ Community Engagement

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