

# Fact Sheet on the Exide Cleanup, Reading PA

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**

**Mid-Atlantic Region**

**1650 Arch Street**

**Philadelphia, PA 19103**

## **USEPA Fact Sheet on the Exide Cleanup, Reading PA**

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### **Site Description:**

The Exide Technologies Site, located at Nolan Street and Spring Valley Road, occupies approximately 50 acres. The Facility currently manufactures and recycles lead batteries. As a result of approximately 35 years of lead smelter operation prior to the installation of air pollution controls and the advent of the Clean Air Act of 1970, Exide contributed to lead emissions that impacted the surrounding areas of the Facility. The source of lead off-site is believed to be general plant operations prior to the introduction of air pollution control requirements in the late 60s. Currently, the Exide plant operations are subject to air permits issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's (PADEP) Bureau of Air Quality.

### **Site Activities:**

In August 2000, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) to Exide to investigate the extent of lead contamination in soil near the Facility and to clean up properties that are adversely impacted by the lead emissions. In 2001 and 2002, Exide sampled approximately 650 properties, which equate to approximately 12,500 soil samples taken in Laureldale Borough and Muhlenberg Township. Shortly thereafter, the property owners received a copy of the soil results. Based on the soil results, the properties are grouped into three distinct categories. These categories are defined below:

#### **1. Properties that do not require cleanups:**

These properties contain an average soil lead concentration of 650 parts per million (ppm) or less. EPA will issue a final determination letter to the property owners that states that the average soil lead concentration detected on their property does not pose a health risk and therefore, their properties do not require soil cleanup. Property owners with an average soil lead concentration of 500 ppm have already received the EPA final determination letter.

#### **2. Residential properties that required immediate cleanups:**

These properties contain an average soil lead concentration of 1200 ppm or greater, a level that EPA has determined requires prompt cleanup to ensure long term protection for children. In 2001 and 2002, Exide cleaned up 76 residential properties with an average soil lead concentration above 1200 ppm.

#### **3. Residential properties that require cleanup based on the findings of the site-specific risk assessment:**

These properties contain an average soil lead concentration greater than 650 ppm. The residential cleanup is scheduled to begin in spring 2008.

### **Site-Specific Risk Assessment:**

In the summer of 2002, Exide commenced the implementation of the site-specific risk assessment. The risk assessment evaluates lead exposure risks from various sources, such as tap water, air, lead paint, soil, dust, and food. The risk assessment consists of additional environmental sampling (e.g., tap water, house dust, lead-based paint screening) and a blood lead study. The risk assessment targets residences with children seven years old and younger, who are considered most susceptible to lead exposures. Based on the risk assessment, EPA determines that 650 ppm as a protective soil lead level will ensure long term protection of the residents and the environment in Laureldale Borough and Muhlenberg Township.

Residential properties with soil lead levels of 650 ppm and less do not pose a health risk and will not require soil cleanup. EPA will issue a final determination letter to the property owners. Residential properties that contain soil lead levels greater than 650 ppm will require soil cleanup. The cleanup contractors for Exide and the property owners will be consulted prior to any work being done on their property.

**Contact Information:**

If you have any questions about the Exide investigation contact EPA Region 3, Philadelphia PA, Khai M. Dao at 1 (800) 352-1973, ext. 45467