

Superfund Eligibility Evaluation of Santa Susana Field Laboratory has been Completed

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has prepared this fact sheet to inform Simi Valley community members and stakeholders that we have completed our Preliminary Assessment/Site Inspection (or PA/SI) of the Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL) site in California, including Areas I-IV and the Energy Technology Engineering Center (ETEC).

The Preliminary Assessment (PA)/Site Inspection (SI) is used by EPA to evaluate the potential for a release of hazardous substances from a site. During the site assessment process, EPA reviews existing site information to identify contaminants and evaluate the pathways that might bring them in contact with people, animals and the surrounding environment. Then EPA uses a screening process to rank hazardous waste sites based on specific criteria.

The Hazard Ranking System (HRS) is a numerically-based screening system that uses information from the initial, limited investigations (PA/SI) to assess the relative potential of sites to pose a threat to human health or the environment. The score determines the eligibility for placing the site on the Superfund list.

EPA has determined that the SSFL site is eligible for placement on the National Priority List (NPL) of federal cleanup sites, commonly known as the Superfund List.

Results

The results of the PA/SI investigation are available to the public in the three existing SSFL repositories at the Simi Valley Library, California State University, Northridge, and the Los Angeles Public Library (see library contact information at the end of this fact sheet). They are also posted on the EPA Region IX webpage (<http://www.epa.gov/region09/waste/sfund/santasusana/index.html>).



Figure 1: Santa Susana Field Laboratory Site



Background

The SSFL is a 2800-acre facility located in Ventura County approximately two miles south of the City of Simi Valley and 30 miles northwest of Los Angeles.

The SSFL is divided into four areas which are under different ownership and operation. Boeing owns and operates Areas I, III and IV. Primary operations include the development and testing of liquid fuel rocket motors. The rocket motor operations have been active since the late 1940's and have resulted in chemical contamination.

Similar operations were conducted in Area II, which is owned by NASA. Boeing also operates the 90-acre ETEC in Area IV as a contractor of the Department of Energy (DOE).

Between 1949 and 1988, Boeing operated 10 nuclear reactors and related facilities that resulted in chemical and radiological contamination at ETEC. All nuclear reactors and fuel elements were removed from SSFL. The ongoing cleanup of the chemical contamination is currently managed by the State of California Department of Toxic Substances Control. The ongoing cleanup of the remaining radiological contamination is managed by DOE.

Next Steps

In December 2007, EPA requested the State of California's position on listing SSFL on the NPL.

In January 2008, EPA received a letter from the State requesting that EPA defer NPL listing for six months to allow the State to negotiate a formal cleanup agreement with Boeing and fully evaluate possible impacts of NPL listing.

In response to the State's request for an extension, EPA will delay consideration of listing. After the six-month period, EPA will reevaluate proposing SSFL for listing on the NPL. In the meantime EPA is working with DOE and CalEPA to plan for additional radiological assessment work.

SSFL Site Repositories:

Simi Valley Library

2969 Tapo Canyon Road
Simi Valley, California 93063
(805) 526-1735

California State University, Northridge

Urban Archives Center
Oviatt Library, Room 4
18111 Nordhoff Street
Northridge, California 91330
Attention: Mr. Robert Marshall
(818) 677-2271

Los Angeles Public Library

Platt Branch
23600 Victory Boulevard
Woodland Hills, California 91367
Attention: Janet Metzler
(818) 340-9386



For More Information:

EPA has two project managers working on the SSFL site. If you have questions about the PA/SI and NPL listing process, please contact Dawn Richmond (see contact information below). If you would like more information on the overall SSFL site cleanup project, please contact Nicole Moutoux (see contact information below). If you have questions about EPA's community involvement process, please contact David Cooper or you may call the USEPA toll-free message line at (800) 231-3075.

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