

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



West Lake Update

April 7, 2014

From Karl Brooks, Regional Administrator

Last week, EPA released a memorandum from our Office of Research and Development which outlined its analysis of the report by the PRP's contractor on the potential effects of the subsurface smoldering event coming into contact with the radiologically-impacted material located in OU1 of the West Lake Landfill. I realize you may have questions about the memo and its effect on EPA's plans moving forward.

The ORD memo evaluates hypothetical scenarios which EPA believes to be highly unlikely, and it notes a number of concerns about those scenarios. In our view, these concerns underscore the need for the isolation barrier to be put into place as soon as possible. I expect visible work on this barrier to begin in May.

It's important to note that the ORD analysis does not contradict EPA Region 7's assessment of data that shows there are no off-site exposures involving harmful materials occurring at this site. Protecting the people who live and work in the area will always be our number one priority.

The ORD memo does not impact the process for selection of a long term remedy for the site. Construction of an isolation barrier will give EPA time and opportunity to conduct the appropriate technical evaluations to determine the best long-term remedy. Remedies currently under consideration include full or partial excavations of the buried RIM with either on-site disposal in an encapsulated cell, or off-site disposal in an appropriate facility. An engineered cap remedy also remains under consideration.

I know you will continue to have questions and concerns about the site, and are anxious to see progress. EPA is committed to providing timely information to the public, and we share your interest in seeing progress at the site.

I would like to encourage everyone to read the ORD memo in its entirety.

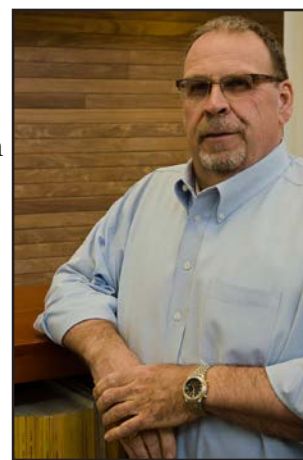
It's available on the Region 7 website: www.epa.gov/region7/cleanup/west_lake_landfill/pdf/west-lake-etsc-observationsonemsireport.pdf

EPA to Conduct Air Monitoring Before and During Barrier Installation

EPA is in the preliminary stages of developing a plan to conduct air sampling and radiation monitoring before and during the isolation barrier installation. The plan is to document background conditions off the site prior to construction activities and to also monitor during construction activities to determine if any releases are occurring above health based benchmarks. EPA envisions setting up several monitoring locations surrounding the site, in addition to on-site monitoring. EPA plans to sample for typical solid waste landfill gases such as sulfur dioxide, hydrogen sulfide, carbon monoxide, and volatile organic compounds. Radiation monitoring for radon, alpha, beta and gamma emissions will also be conducted. This monitoring by EPA will be separate from, and in addition to, the on-site air monitoring being done by the potentially responsible parties' (PRPs) contractor under EPA oversight. As with all work EPA performs at the site, the Agency will recover its costs from the PRPs.

Meet Jeff Field

Jeff Field began his career at EPA in 1995 after serving in the United States Marine Corps and earning a degree in Earth Sciences with a minor in Environmental Geology. Currently, he is a branch chief in EPA's Superfund Division. In this role, Jeff directs a staff of engineers and scientists who manage a multitude of Superfund sites, primarily in Kansas and Missouri. Jeff works closely with Dan Gravatt, the project manager for the West Lake site, on all aspects related to EPA's regulatory oversight of the project. Specifically, Jeff reviews technical work products and correspondence, provides technical direction for the project, and reports to EPA's senior management team regarding site progress. Previously, Jeff held positions in EPA's Drinking Water Program and also served as a Superfund remedial project manager.



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