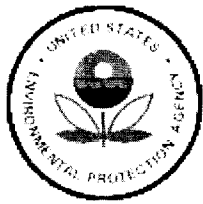


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EPA Releases New Data for Woonasquatucket River: Most Findings are Below Dioxin Standard

Contact: Alice Kaufman, EPA Press Office, 617-918-1064

For Immediate Release: July 12, 2002; Release # 02-07-15

Boston - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced today results of recent dioxin sampling from along the Woonasquatucket River that show most levels below those requiring further cleanup. Based on screening of TCDD-dioxin, 39 of 40 soil samples collected in April showed TCDD-dioxin levels below the one part per billion (1 ppb) action level.

This latest round of sampling was conducted by Loureiro Engineering Associates, Inc. (LEA) from Plainville, CT to supplement the existing information on dioxin distribution in the floodplain soils. The one sample that exceeded EPA's standard was slightly over the action level at 1.52 ppb, and was taken from a depth greater than one foot below the surface. This sample was taken from an area along the river and its floodplain that is already slated for excavation later this year as part of the "non-time critical removal" action.

"It's good news that almost all of the samples came back clean," said Robert W. Varney, EPA New England regional administrator. "And the one sample where there is a problem is going to be addressed as part of the cleanup plan we put forward last spring."

"These results reinforce the direction EPA is already headed in with the non-time critical removal action - that there are discrete areas of elevated contamination in floodplain soils and excavation of these discrete areas, in advance of a decision for the overall cleanup of the site, is the right way to go," said North Providence Mayor A. Ralph Mollis.

Six potentially responsible parties, under EPA order to complete the work, hired LEA to perform the work under EPA's oversight. LEA will conduct additional sampling next week to delineate the areas where excavation will take place. EPA expects the next phase of excavation to be completed in the fall.

This past spring, LEA completed restoration of the Allendale Dam, with EPA's oversight.

The Centredale Manor Restoration Project is located on Smith Street in North Providence and includes the Woonasquatucket River and the floodplain between Route 44 downstream to and including Lymanville Dam.

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