UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
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OFFICE OF
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

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MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Burlington Hill Site Visit

FROM: Julie Wroble, Toxicologist

TO: Andy Smith, On-Scene Coordinator

Overview
EPA received a call from a resident who was concerned about potential exposures to asbestos in the subdivision where he resides in Burlington, Washington. The Burlington Hill site is a residential development built in close proximity to the former Asbestos-Talc Products of Washington, Inc. EPA conducted opportunistic and reconnaissance sampling at targeted locations to determine if asbestos was present. At one of four locations sampled, asbestos was identified.

Introduction
A resident who lives on Burlington Hill, in Burlington, Skagit County, Washington called EPA during the summer of 2012 to ask about the potential presence of asbestos in the subdivision where he lives. He provided documentation in support of his claim; in particular, he referenced a USGS Report (Van Gosen 2010) which identified Burlington Hill as the site of the former Asbestos-Talc Products of Washington, Inc. EPA's Andy Smith, Julie Wroble, and Lorraine Edmond visited the site on September 26, 2012, to meet with the resident, conduct a site reconnaissance, take photographs and collect samples for asbestos analysis.

Background

Methods
In response to the resident's concern, EPA mobilized for the site visit and focused on areas that could be easily accessed. Figure 1 shows locations where field observations were made by the Lorraine Edmond and samples were collected by Julie Wroble. These locations consisted of two roadcuts, the resident's property, and the former quarry. Samples were collected for analysis by PLM, a light microscope technique that identifies asbestos in bulk materials, such as soil. Additional analyses by scanning electron microscopy and x-ray diffraction were performed to confirm the presence of asbestos and to provide images of any asbestos found. A commercial laboratory was used for fast-turnaround PLM samples, while EPA's Manchester Environmental Laboratory (MEL) was used for confirmation sampling and for more extensive analyses.

Samples were collected by scraping loose material from exposed rock into a sample jar for analysis by PLM. For MEL-analyzed samples, larger samples of rock specimens were gathered

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that could be photographed using a stereomicroscope at the laboratory. Additional crushing was needed to reduce these samples to an appropriate size for analysis by PLM. A commercial laboratory was used for fast-turnaround PLM samples, while EPA's Manchester Environmental Laboratory (MEL) was used for confirmation sampling and for more extensive analyses.

Results

Field Notes from the site visit are included as Appendix A. Table 1 summarizes the PLM results from the commercial laboratory. Note that asbestos was identified only at location 1. The type of asbestos identified was actinolite asbestos, which is consistent with what was reported by USGS (Van Gosen 2010). No other types of asbestos were identified at the site.

Conclusions
We did identify asbestos at one location
We didn't identify asbestos at the single residence sampled.

Uncertainties

1. A limited number of areas was visited and sampled
2. Air samples were not collected so risks cannot be quantified.

Discussion

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