Message

From: Coats, Janetta [coats.janetta@epa.gov]
Sent: 7/15/2019 12:36:12 PM
To: Fife, Greg [fife.greg@epa.gov]; Durant, Jennah [Durant.Jennah@epa.gov]
CC: Hubbard, Joseph [Hubbard.Joseph@epa.gov]
Subject: RE: More reporter questions on Lowerline removal

Good morning

FYI:

Site travel during the series of emails

July 10, 2019 thru July 12, 2019

Assuming requests completed?

Thanks,

Janetta Coats
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https://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-community-involvement

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From: Fife, Greg
Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2019 6:52 PM
To: Durant, Jennah <Durant.Jennah@epa.gov>
Cc: Hubbard, Joseph <Hubbard.Joseph@epa.gov>; Coats, Janetta <coats.janetta@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: More reporter questions on Lowerline removal

Ok

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 11, 2019, at 4:50 PM, Durant, Jennah <Durant.Jennah@epa.gov> wrote:

How about:

1) When did the Department of Energy first inform you of its discovery of radioactive materials in Gert Town, and what did the DOE recommend be done at that time? Has DOE been involved in the follow-up, planning and/or remediation of the site since then, or has DOE basically dropped out of the picture?

Please refer to the site's administrative record, available to the public at Xavier University, for information on DOE's involvement. EPA has been the lead agency for removing contaminated material.

2) Are there any plans to do a follow-up evaluation of the site now that the remediation work is complete, and if so, what are those plans?

EPA will return to conduct a scan on Lowerline to verify the cleanup remains effective.

3) Were the involved agencies and entities — EPA, LDEQ, City of NOLA, etc. — caught off guard and surprised by the unexpectedly large extent, amount and depth of the radioactive materials found at the Gert Town site?

The removal area was consistent with the information the city's contractor presented to EPA.

4) There has been a lawsuit filed by residents of Gert Town asserting that the city and other government agencies failed to adequately notify and protect the citizenry from danger in this case. Does the EPA have any comment on the lawsuit, amor have comments in general regarding public dissatisfaction with how this situation was handle?

EPA and the city of New Orleans worked to inform the community by speaking with residents directly, going door-to-door and at church services, and through other means such as having community relations coordinators onsite.

From: Fife, Greg
Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2019 3:31 PM
To: Durant, Jennah <Durant.Jennah@epa.gov>
Cc: Hubbard, Joseph <Hubbard.Joseph@epa.gov>; Coats, Janetta <coats.janetta@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: More reporter questions on Lowerline removal

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 11, 2019, at 3:06 PM, Durant, Jennah <Durant.Jennah@epa.gov> wrote:

> Hi Greg, we got more questions from another reporter. For #1, can we just say how the site was referred to EPA? For #3, obviously we can't speak for other agencies; I think we can say how large the area was first assumed to be versus how large it ended up. For #4, we should probably refer the reporter to the city.
>
> 1) When did the Department of Energy first inform you of its discovery of radioactive materials in Gert Town, and what did the DOE recommend be done at that time? Has

DOE been involved in the follow-up, planning and/or remediation of the site since then, or has DOE basically dropped out of the picture?

DOE contacted Carl Edlund this year. I do not have the email on my phone. It is in the Admin Record that Jo Horner took care of or John Martin has the original email from Carl with the DOE email attached. I apologize, I'm in DC all week and don't have my computer and thus only limited access to my old emails.

Since then, we have had one conversation with DOE. It was a discussion of what they found in their 2018 fly-over survey.

Of note: it appears that DOE has confused the results of a 2013 fly-over. Based on looking at their results map, no radiation was found then.

2) Are there any plans to do a follow-up evaluation of the site now that the remediation work is complete, and if so, what are those plans?

There is one final follow up now that the boxes are gone. The rad buggies will walk Lowerline to verify cleanup. These buggies can read Radiation well below the naturally occurring levels found in New Orleans.

Also, we used the rad buggies plus the EPA Scanner van to survey a wide area surrounding Lowerline. It included areas across S. Carrollton and to I-10, etc.. Nothing was found in those large areas. The results in final form are not yet available.

3) Were the involved agencies and entities — EPA, LDEQ, City of NOLA, etc. — caught off guard and surprised by the unexpectedly large extent, amount and depth of the radioactive materials found at the Gert Town site?

When it was presented to EPA, the area on Lowerline was defined by the City's contractor. And our excavation was very consistent with what they found after their assessment.

The volume or amount of Curies that were removed are consistent with a capsule or some sort of mechanism that exited at the time the radium was deposited there. How and what that mechanism was may never be known.

The depth was consistent from the first excavation to the last. Under two levels of pavement and mixed with a layer of oyster shells at about 30 inches deep. And it do not migrate, neither vertically nor horizontally.

4) There has been a lawsuit filed by residents of Gert Town asserting that the city and other government agencies failed to adequately notify and protect the citizenry from danger in this case. Does the EPA have any comment on the lawsuit, amor have

comments in general regarding public dissatisfaction with how this situation was handle?

You can talk to Janetta about all that was done but I feel good about what was done. Door to door, going the church services to talk to the parishioners, many discussions with nearby residents, ample onsite presences of community relations coordinators, flyers, news releases or desk statements, placement of the administrative record in the nearby library, etc.

Since there wasn't any elevated radiation readings or levels even reaching the fence perimeter, we went well beyond anybody who had a potential of being exposed.

We had direct-read Radiation monitors. We had air samplers that collected dust. We used dosimeters on fences to detect and record radiation. And everything was nicely clean and controlled.