Message

From: Petersen, Chris [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=AD3A9D0A7FF44172A8A34A8BEDCF349F-PETERSEN, CHRIS]
Sent: 7/17/2019 7:25:20 PM
To: Greg Fife [Fife.Greg@epa.gov]
Subject: FW: ACTION: Gert Town removal--Baton Rouge Advocate

Please check their answers for accuracy

From: Meyer, John
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2019 1:56 PM
To: Carroll, Craig <Carroll.Craig@epa.gov>; Petersen, Chris <petersen.chris@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: ACTION: Gert Town removal--Baton Rouge Advocate

fyi

John C Meyer
Chief, Superfund Remedial Branch
Region 6

Office (214) 665-6742
Cell (214) 460-5897

From: Taheri, Diane
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2019 1:55 PM
To: Edlund, Carl <Edlund.Carl@epa.gov>; Meyer, John <Meyer.John@epa.gov>
Subject: Fwd: ACTION: Gert Town removal--Baton Rouge Advocate

Did y'all see these responses and are you good with these? Pretty straightforward. .

Tight timeline.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Durant, Jennah" <Durant.Jennah@epa.gov>
> **Date:** July 17, 2019 at 12:40:55 PM CDT
> **To:** "Taheri, Diane" <Taheri.Diane@epa.gov>, "Balandran, Olivia-R" <balandran.olivia-r@epa.gov>
> **Cc:** "Hubbard, Joseph" <Hubbard.Joseph@epa.gov>
> **Subject: FW: ACTION: Gert Town removal--Baton Rouge Advocate**
>
> The reporter's deadline is 3 pm today. Responses from OSC Greg Fife:
>
> Can you let me know what the levels of radiation were before the remediation?
> The highest levels, recorded at the removal site in about a 3-inch diameter area, measured around 10,000 microRem/hour. That area is now less than 8 microRem/hour. The perimeter of the street measured just above the background level before the removal, and now measures at background.

Was this considered a reopening of a superfund site? If so, how was the community informed of the plan of action?
This is was not a reopening of a Superfund site. EPA and the City of New Orleans worked to inform the community by speaking with residents directly, going door-to-door, speaking to community members before/after church services, and having community relations coordinators on site.

There were 6 total containers, right? How large were they?
Six containers were brought to the site, and one was not needed to complete the removal. Each container has about 20 cubic yards of space.

Where is Waste Control Specialists located?
Andrews, Texas

Can I see the plan of remediation and the removal action memo?
These documents are available at the public repository for the site, housed at Xavier University.

From: Woodruff, Emily
Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2019 10:38 AM
To: Durant, Jennah <Durant.Jennah@epa.gov>
Cc: Hubbard, Joseph <Hubbard.Joseph@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Gert Town

Thank you – just a few more questions.

Can you let me know what the levels of radiation were before the remediation?

Was this considered a reopening of a superfund site? If so, how was the community informed of the plan of action?

There were 6 total containers, right? How large were they?

Where is Waste Control Specialists located?

Can I see the plan of remediation and the removal action memo?

From: Durant, Jennah <Durant.Jennah@epa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2019 10:18 AM
To: Woodruff, Emily <ewoodruff@theadvocate.com>
Cc: Hubbard, Joseph <Hubbard.Joseph@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: Gert Town

Hi Emily,

Responses to your questions are below.

Thanks,
Jennah Durant
US EPA Region 6
Press Office

214 665-2200 (main)
214 665-2287 (direct)

Where were the containers moved?

The material was sent to Waste Control Specialists, a facility that is licensed to accept and dispose of low-level radioactive waste.

How much soil was put into the containers

Each container had between 9 and 11 cubic yards of road base, pavement, and the contaminated soil layer.

Was there groundwater also removed?

No groundwater was impacted.

I understand the area of concern was bigger than anticipated – about two and a half blocks, correct?

Before the investigation and removal began the area was thought to be about one square yard. The completed removal extended about the middle third of the 3400 block of Lowerline.

Is the remediation over, or will it be monitored?

The removal is complete. Monitors have shown radiation is now at background levels. EPA will return to conduct a scan on Lowerline to verify the cleanup remains effective.

What are the radon levels now?

Radiation has been reduced to near background levels.

What did the test results of the material show?

The results showed radium and associated decay products such as lead and bismuth.

What are the theories on the source of contamination?

The source of the contamination is unknown. It might date to the late 1940s or early 1950s.

From: "Woodruff, Emily" <ewoodruff@theadvocate.com>
Date: July 9, 2019 at 2:55:20 PM EDT
To: "fife.greg@epa.gov" <fife.greg@epa.gov>
Cc: "coats.janetta@epa.gov" <coats.janetta@epa.gov>
Subject: Gert Town

Hi Greg,

I'm a reporter for The Times Picayune | New Orleans Advocate. I am writing a story on Gert Town and the recent removal of radioactive materials in the neighborhood. Are you able to answer the following?

1. Where were the containers moved?

The material was disposed of at a proper facility, Waste Control Specialist. They are licensed to accept and dispose of the low level radioactive waste.

2.
3. How much soil was put into the containers

Each of the five containers had between 9 and 11 cubic yards of road base, pavement, and the contaminated soil layer. One container was never used.

4. Was there groundwater also removed?

No groundwater was impacted.

5.
6. I understand the area of concern was bigger than anticipated – about two and a half blocks, correct?

The original area was believed to be limited to be a 3 feet by 3 feet area. The City tried to address that but the follow up investigation found additional contamination. All limited to about the middle third of the 3400 block of Lowerline. There were a few discreet areas excavated, approximately 5'x5', 10'x20', and 20'x40' with some modifications during excavation.

It is not correct that the contamination went beyond that block of Lowerline.

7. Is the remediation over, or will it be monitored?

The cleanup is believed to be complete. EPA will return to conduct a scan on Lowerline to verify the cleanup is effective.

The readings showed that the contamination was removed. Since the boxes were removed, it allows the meters to read down to background.

8.
9. What are the radon levels now?

I'm assuming that this means Radium, not Radon. The Radiation has been reduced to near background levels.

10.
11. What did the test results of the material show?

The results showed radium and associated decay products such as lead and bismuth. The amount of the total radioactive material is not inconsistent with several possible tools or mechanisms used in the past.

12.
13. What are the theories on the source of contamination?

It is all theory and speculation. It appears that the contamination dates to the late 1940s or early 1950s.

14.

Thanks so much,

Emily Woodruff

Health Reporter
ewoodruff@theadvocate.com
504-233-8154 cell
@emily_woodruff_