Message

From: Kondreck, Robert [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=F47C02D4330A4E1D94727BAA31271C81-RKONDREC]
Sent: 2/16/2023 4:45:57 PM
To: b.bader@lasalle-il.gov; Ruesch, Paul [ruesch.paul@epa.gov]; aaron.martin@illinois.gov; Chris Pozzi [cpozzi@lasallecountyil.gov]; kim.biggs@illinois.gov [Kim.Biggs@Illinois.gov]; Paul.Eisenbrandt@illinois.gov; Falconio, Tony [Tony.Falconio@Illinois.gov]
Subject: La Salle Chemical Fire Resident Inquire - FW: Concerns

FYI on conversation with a resident to keep you in the loop.

From: Kondreck, Robert
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 4:53 PM
To Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)
Subject: RE: Concerns

Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)

The sample results that you are referring to were collected by Illinois EPA. USEPA only performed air monitoring. No samples were collected by USEPA. Illinois EPA collected their samples and determined the analysis under their own guidance. I suggested a few locations based on folks I met at the press event but it was up to Illinois EPA to choose what location to sample. When I contacted the Illinois Department of Public Health yesterday they said they were reviewing the Illinois EPA and City of La Salle data so I assume it will be out soon. I asked them to contact you directly via e-mail so you could have a conversation of health implications caused by the release. I was given EPA's Brad Frost at Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP) to call for sample results although you would have better luck getting it through the health department e-mail that I reclarified with the correct one. I believe the health departments are putting together a statement with results that will be made public. They are in charge of the release of that statement.

There were three properties that were sampled but not remediated by USEPA that were sampled by the City of La Salle's contractor. All three were below remedial cleanup objectives established by the Superfund cleanup following the fire. None of the other properties were above action levels. As a result USEPA does not anticipate collecting additional samples. I will bring up the idea of additional sampling to Illinois EPA tomorrow. It is their decision if they want to sample.

The City of La Salle and their contractor decided on the location, quantity of samples, and analysis. USEPA did not have any involvement in that process.

Myself and a coworker were deployed as part of the emergency response phase. We were asked to perform air monitoring at the request of the Illinois EPA. I was there to direct contractors performing air monitoring and aid in other elements of a release. Once the fire was out the air monitoring portion was complete and we demobilized. EPA has stayed on in part to transition cleanup efforts to Illinois EPA. Illinois EPA will oversee the cleanup efforts which is the phase we are now in.

USEPA did not clear the community independently. The decision was made between USEPA, City of La Salle, and the public health department in part based on air data, our understanding of the breakdown of the chemical released, the mitigation methods suggested to the community (washing surfaces down), and the livelihood of the community (cannot shelter in place for weeks on end as we wait for results).
Robert

From Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2023 7:12 PM

To: Kondreck, Robert <kondreck.robert@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Concerns

Robert,
Again, I thank you for your time and quick response. I appreciate you taking the time to discuss these concerns with me. This has and continues to be a very stressing situation. My follow up questions would be: where are the sample results that the EPA had collected? Have those results been released to the public as of yet? Have the samples that the EPA had collected been tested for other chemicals and/or heavy metals that could have been possibly released in this explosion? The possibility of asbestos being involved is likely as well.

Pertaining getting my soil retested, my main concern is to see what the current level of manganese would be in my soil. The EPA previously had tested multiple sections of my yard for manganese as well as other heavy metals. They have included a layout of my property to determine which samples were taken from which sections. I understand that we may or may not be able to state that the increase is solely based off of the chemicals that were released during the fire. However, we know that manganese was released that day, and we are expecting my yard in particular to have more elevated levels of manganese versus someone whom already their yard previously remediated. The concern with having more manganese in my yard could prompt me as the homeowner, to have to follow different precautions compared to my neighbors. Frankly, I feel we are not getting answers. I know this is hard to understand as you are not personally living in this everyday, but this is our everything. We want to know that we're safe and that this is not going to have long lasting effects on our health or the health of the wildlife. Each of us in the community were affected in different ways. We should all be assessed together, but individually as well. No individual is going to have the same yard and items in it as their neighbor next door. We should have all been offered sampling of our yards. How were the selected areas of sampling chosen?

Also, I understand that this may not be your area of study. As you had stated your main area of study is geology. You are listed as the site contact for this specific fire. I just want to clarify what your position is here? In layman's terms, what are you here to do for us? I would also like to understand as to why we were cleared by the EPA considering they only had air monitoring results.

Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP) Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 13, 2023, at 09:03, Kondreck, Robert <kondreck.robert@epa.gov> wrote:

Good Morning Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)
The sample results that were being referred to were collected by a private professional environmental firm and analyzed by an accredited laboratory at the request of your elected officials. The samples appear to have been collected using appropriate methods and therefore there is no reason to believe the results are not valid. Based on the report, the purpose of these samples was to compare the results to the Illinois EPA action levels not the Superfund associated samples. Illinois EPA action levels are a measure of risk to human health and if the concentration is over that level, there is potential for health risks and a remedial action to take place. The concentration of manganese in these samples is below Illinois EPA action levels and therefore there does not appear to be a reason for any additional action, including collecting additional samples.

Comparing before and after concentrations of manganese in soil to determine if the fire caused a statistically significant increase would have involved extensive sampling before the fire occurred. Soil is not homogonous therefore there will be a range of manganese concentrations in your soil throughout your property. Therefore it would be difficult to compare a before and after sample because it could be measuring the varying levels of manganese in the soil. Your neighbors that were sampled by Brownfields may have noticed that the results they collected were below or above the EPA Superfund results.

Because of this we assess risk based on action levels. Based on the 16 samples collected by Brownfields there does not appear to be any properties that were above the action levels after this fire, regardless of if they had their lawns removed and new "clean" backfill put into place.

The main chemical released was potassium permanganate. Based on general chemistry we anticipate the by products to be, most concerning, manganese dioxide or manganese when involved in the fire. The assumption that substantial "other chemicals" were released does not align with our understanding of materials involved in the fire. In the previous e-mail I urged you to contact the Illinois Department of Public health for health related concerns as a result of the fire and do so again. The contact information is in the first e-mail.

Carus has confirmed that they will do house cleanings. Please call their hotline number and request a house cleaning. The website below also contains a mechanism to file for an insurance claim. You can always file a claim through your own insurance.

Robert

From Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)
Sent: Sunday, February 12, 2023 10:26 AM
To: Kondreck, Robert <kondreck.robert@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Concerns

Good morning Robert,
I appreciate your response and providing me with this information. However, I have further concerns based off this information you have provided me with. I did not believe the EPA was going off of these 3rd party sample results. I was under the impression that the EPA was performing/ performed their own samples. I was also under the impression that the 3rd party company and their results were not affiliated with the EPA. I am concerned as to why we are be referring to these results provided by a 3rd party agency that our city had brought in to compare test results from the samples the EPA had collected. Brownfield also only tested their samples for manganese and potassium permanganate, the possibility of other chemicals being involved is substantial.

Pertaining the soil samples taken by Brownfield, can you attest that those residents that had their soil samples taken on Zinc street had not had their yards previously remediated but the superfund clean up? I am requesting you as the EPA to again test my soil, not the third party agency. It does not make feel comfortable and safe to know that our EPA is following sample results and recommendations from an agency that we were told, is not affiliated with the EPA.

I have been in contact with Carus via the hotline on multiple occasions and have not been offered a cleaning services for the inside of my home. They have already attempted to clean and power wash the outside of my home unsuccessfully. I am concerned that we are not being informed of any health concerns or precautions we should be following. I feel this information should be available to the public, not something we have to seek out on our own accord. We have also not been offered any reimbursement for the water and supplies they originally recommended we use to "deactivate" this chemical. Again, I appreciate your response and the corresponding information, but this has now brought on other concerns.
Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP) ent from my iPhone

On Feb 10, 2023, at 18:27 Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP) wrote:

Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP) Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Kondreck, Robert" <kondreck.robert@epa.gov>
Date: February 10, 2023 at 09:43:05 CST
To: Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)
Subject: RE: Concerns

Hell Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)
As you may know, the City of LaSalle has hired a 3rd party contractor (Brownfields Environmental Engineering) to collect samples throughout the affected area. According to the report Brownfields collected 16 soil samples, three of which were collected on Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP) Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP) All of the soil samples results indicated manages at lower than state action levels and in some cases below background levels. I received a copy of this report last night and included it as an attachment. Based on these results Brownfields did not recommend any additional soil sampling. As a result, there does not appear to be any plans to collect additional soil samples.

The filter pictures you included are concerning. Also your concerns about your well being and not being able enjoy your property due to this fire should be addressed. I went to school for geology and cannot speak competently about the toxicology of the released chemicals and how it relates directly to your health and wellbeing. I strongly urge you to call or e-mail the Illinois Department of Public Health who have physicians and toxicologist on hand to answer your health concerns. Please call or e-mail 217-782-5830 or DPH.Tox@illinois.gov. We have been working with the health agencies since the fire began and they receive weekly briefing on the Site so they are aware of the communities situation.

Early on in the release media coverage reported residents should spray the affected area with chemicals listed below to "deactivate" the fallen chemical. It was later revised to ask residents to spray affected areas with copious amounts of water. The copious amounts of water was meant to wash the potasium permanganate/manganese dioxide so it would mitigate direct contact to human and animals and also wash off the oxidizer so it would prevent further staining on property. Now Carus offers cleaning interior and exterior house cleaning so residents are not responsible for cleaning up after a release that they did not cause. Carus has also formalized an insurance claim process so damaged property can be replaced. To get a house/property cleaning and to file an insurance claim please visit: https://www.carusllc.com/carus-llc-fire-news-updates/

I realize this chemical fire has been traumatic to the community and some of the health concerns have still not been fully addressed. I hope that you will call Illinois Department of Public Health where you can express these concerns and they can speak to you with more confidence since they are educated and trained in this area.

Robert

From Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)
Sent: Thursday, February 9, 2023 6:35 PM
To: Kondreck, Robert <kondreck.robert@epa.gov>
Subject: Concerns

Good evening Robert,
My name is Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP), and I have a few concerns I am hoping you can help me address. I wanted to reach out to you regarding the elevated levels of the chemicals that were released from the Carus Chemical fire that occurred in January 11, 2023. I live on Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP) in LaSalle. I had my soil tested by the EPA in September of 2020 due to the contamination of the Matthiessen Zinc factory. Therefore, I know I already had levels of elevated manganese in my soil. My concern is what has this recent exposure and contamination done to further elevate the manganese levels that were already present in my yard? I am requesting to get my soil tested again to compare from my results from 2020. I had also replaced my furnace filter after this to find it was black in color. I will include photos for you to review. It is side by side in comparison with a new filter. I am also concerned as to why we as the citizens affected, were asked to be responsible for the clean up process? Informed we should spray this product with a vinegar, water, hydrogen peroxide mixture. I do not feel comfortable cleaning up a chemical I am not informative about. I am concerned for my health as well as my friends, family, neighbors, and pets. I am also very concerned for the wildlife and plant life. I feel uncomfortable when filling my bird feeders and putting corn out for the squirrels. I feel uncomfortable playing with my dog in my own yard. What can be done to assure our safety as well as everyone else's? I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your time.
<image001.jpg>
<image002.jpg>

Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP) ent from my iPhone
<Environmental Summary Report 2-7-2023.pdf>