
FACT SHEET



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Current Status of G&B Demolition Project and Potential Impacts on Children at Landmark Academy, Redding, CT

This fact sheet is a follow-up to an open discussion session regarding the potential health impacts to children attending Landmark Academy associated with redevelopment activities occurring at the former Gilbert & Bennett manufacturing facility.

At an April 26th, 2007 meeting, health concerns of parents were addressed by representatives of the Academy, Fuss & O'Neill (Consulting Engineers for Georgetown Land Development LLC), the State Department of Public Health (DPH), and the State Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The purpose of this meeting was to address concerns about dust driven off site by gusty winds. Parents at Landmark Academy expressed concern that this dust threatened the health of their children. DPH has reviewed the available information and does not find evidence indicating that children were exposed to any specific chemical contaminant from the site.

Redevelopment activities currently underway at the site involve the abatement of asbestos and demolition of buildings formerly used in the manufacturing of wire products. Licensed asbestos consultants conducted an inspection to determine the presence of asbestos prior to commencement of demolition and renovation activities at the site. Licensed asbestos contractors were hired to remove these materials prior to the demolition or renovation of the buildings. These abatement activities were subject to DPH regulations.

Based upon a review of available information, DPH does not believe that the wind-blown dust represented a health hazard to children at the Academy. Discussion of this event did not bring to light any information indicating that the dust was anything other than a nuisance. Therefore, to keep this intrusion to a minimum, DPH recommends that strict dust control measures be implemented on site.

The following is a list of answers to specific health-related questions raised at the April 26th meeting.

Does the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) take children into account when it devises its health risk standards? Yes. Remediation standards, from EPA or other authorities, take into account the most sensitive subpopulation, or lifestage, of exposed individuals. The establishment of a remediation standard depends on the chemical, the relevant population, and the route of exposure. Some chemicals, such as lead, are more toxic in children because their growing bodies absorb more lead and developing brains are more sensitive to the damaging effects of lead. Remediation standards for lead are therefore set at the lowest level practical.

How was the 65 microgram per cubic meter action standard for dust in the air developed?

The EPA standard of 65 micrograms per cubic meter was developed in 1997 to protect against chronic and acute health effects of small (microscopic) particles (2.5 microns and less). EPA used this number as a regulatory standard to determine which areas of the country had the worst air quality. The standard is a conservative (safe) reference for evaluating exposures near the site because it considers the smallest particles, which are the most harmful.

We understand you're measuring the amount of dust in the air, but is anyone measuring for contaminants in the air?

Monitoring at the site was limited to dust measurements. Chemicals are not used in the demolition process or stored on site. Therefore, any chemicals found in the air would more than likely originate from somewhere else.

Is there an opportunity to create a baseline for air quality for the school and then perform air monitoring for dust during construction activities?

Baseline air values already exist for nearby monitoring locations in Fairfield County. According to DEP, the average daily concentration of small particles in the air is 12 micrograms per cubic meter (measured as particulate matter smaller than 2.5 microns.) Short-term levels can be much higher even for baseline measurements

Do we need to be worried about cadmium in the drinking water?

EPA had the waste lagoons that previously existed at the site sampled for cadmium and results from soil indicate that cadmium was present at very low (background) levels. In contrast, zinc and lead concentrations were many thousands of times higher than cadmium concentrations. (From Final Site Investigation Report) Cadmium has not been detected in the school's water, or in over 100 nearby private wells sampled by an EPA contractor in 2000.

Which project activity is more dangerous – demolition of buildings or remediation?

Both activities are regulated and considered safe.

Are our kids safe?

There is no evidence that children at the school are being exposed to contaminants from activities related to site remediation. Furthermore, there is no evidence that kids are drinking water containing chemicals related to past industrial activities on site.

What is more dangerous, zinc or lead?

Lead is more of an environmental exposure concern than zinc. Lead is toxic to the nervous system, while zinc is a necessary dietary nutrient.

Is there an elevated amount of lead at Landmark Academy?

Because lead is in the environment, it is likely that a small amount of lead is present everywhere. On April 20th, 2007, HYGENIX, Inc., performed surface sampling of windowsills and found no detectable levels of lead or asbestos. From these results, the consulting firm concluded that lead and asbestos concentrations were within background levels.

If dust levels had a high amount of lead, are our children safe?

The majority of cases of childhood lead poisonings are caused through ingestion. Inhalation of dust is not a significant route of exposure to lead for children. Even if the dust did contain high levels of lead, breathing it would contribute very little to your child's overall lead exposure. To keep your child safe when lead is present at high levels, it is important to keep your child away from areas known to have high levels of lead, keep your child's hands clean and prevent them from putting dirty objects in their mouths.

Is there a State inspector on site when work is being done?

DPH received notification for asbestos abatement conducted at this site. DPH regulations do not require that a State inspector be present when the asbestos abatement is being conducted. No DPH inspection was conducted during abatement at this site. Asbestos consultants, licensed by the DPH, performed project monitoring, including post abatement visual inspections and air sampling, in association with asbestos abatement work at this site.

Will DPH review documents on the removal of asbestos from site and let us know if it was done correctly?

Yes. The DPH will conduct a review of documents related to the removal of asbestos-containing materials from the site. The DPH expects it will take several weeks to complete this review process since it is anticipated that the records produced by the contractors working on the site are quite voluminous. The DPH will provide its assessment of whether the records reflect that asbestos abatement was conducted in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Is noise a regulated activity of the DEP?

Yes and DEP has maintained noise pollution control authority for over 25 years. In general, section 22a-67 of the Connecticut General Statutes provided the statutory authority to regulate noise and the DEP adopted regulations to enforce noise control (e.g.; The State Noise Plan). It is the policy of the state to encourage municipalities to adopt local noise control ordinances. In accordance with state statute, a local noise ordinance cannot become effective until the DEP Commissioner has granted approval. All local noise ordinances must be at least as stringent as the state noise plan. Currently, 63 municipalities have a local noise control ordinance approved by the Commissioner. In 2004, the town of Redding submitted its noise control plan to the DEP for the Commissioner's review and approval. At present, this application is being reviewed by DEP. Should there be suspected violation of the state noise plan in your community, please contact the DEPAir Management Bureau at (860) 424-3436.