NEWS LETTER

DEFENSE FUEL SUPPLY CENTER

No. 2 of 2 **Fall 1996**

Information for Norwalk Neighbors

Restoration Advisory Board Formed to Monitor Environmental Cleanup

Lt. Col. Charles Gross, Commander of Defense Fuel Office-Los Angeles, announced the formation of a Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) at the October 1994 community meeting. The RAB gives Norwalk residents a chance to discuss environmental cleanup issues with project representatives from Defense Fuel Supply Center (DFSC), Santa Fe Pacific Pipelines (SFPP), contracting agencies, and state regulatory agencies.

The RAB first met in March 1995. Since then, the members toured the Tank Farm and participated in a number of workshops on topics including groundwater, conducting site assessment, reviewing technical documents, and Tank Farm project history. The RAB reviewed Remedial Action Plans for the central portion and the south central portion cleanup, southeast portion workplan, and the west side plume control plan. They also receive updates on project status and information on other studies, such as SFPP's sound survey. In May 1996, the RAB toured the facility and watched as new monitoring wells were drilled by SFPP contractors.

The RAB is and will continue to be an important component of the ongoing environmental restoration at the Tank Farm. RAB meetings are open to the public and minutes of RAB meetings are kept in the information repository. ■

Current RAB membership includes:

Mary Jane McIntosh (Community Co-Chair)
Lt. Col. Gross (DFSC Co-Chair)
Tom Danaher (SFPP Co-Chair)
Jill Anderson (City of Norwalk)
Ron Babel (City of Cerritos)
Claire Best (DTSC)
David Caughey (resident)
David Fogle (resident)
Eugene N. Garcia, Ph.D. (resident)
Jim Leserman (Water Replenishment District)
Hugh Marley (RWQCB)
William Miller (resident)
Jeannette Pellam (resident)
John Rifilato (Gatron Industries)
Laurie Smith (resident)
Wanda Sterner (resident)
Ming Young (property owner)

Community Residents Interviewed for Public Participation Plan

Representatives of DFSC and the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) met with Norwalk residents, City officials, and RAB members to conduct community interviews in 1995. The objective of the interviews was to identify community concerns and information needs regarding the Tank Farm. The information gathered during the interviews was used to draft the Public Participation Plan (PPP). The Draft PPP is currently being reviewed by the regulatory agencies and the RAB. Once approved, the final version of the Public Participation Plan will be available in the information repository. ■

Tank Farm Upgrades Continue to Enhance Facility Safety

DFSC completed its latest round of safety upgrades in 1995, uncovering all buried valves and flanges and enclosing them in concrete vaults. The new tank bottom project is under construction and acts as leak detection. Three new tank bottoms were completed by June 1996.

Project completion is scheduled for December 1996.

After the completion of the tank bottom project, DFSC will resurface the tank basins.

DFSC also plans to remove five perimeter tanks from service

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and install an automated fuel handling system, which will include automatic shut-off and spill prevention system.

Other safety projects completed in the past few years include seismic upgrades, conversion of JP-4 jet fuel to the less-volatile JP-8, and discontinuance of truck loading operations.

SFPP has installed one large vault as a leak containment measure and is examining the feasibility of a second. In addition, SFPP is testing a new leak detection device that is connected to buried valves and fittings and is able to detect leaks much earlier than methods currently in use. SFPP is scheduled to start a phased implementation of the leak detectors in September 1996. ■

West Side Barrier Plan and Cleanup

In April 1996, regulatory agencies approved a plan designed to stop flow of 1,2-DCA contamination off-site. The plan, developed jointly by SFPP and DFSC, will create a hydrogeologic barrier to prevent further movement of 1,2-DCA off the Tank Farm. Eleven groundwater extraction wells installed near the western Tank Farm border will pump groundwater. Extracted groundwater and product will be passed through the existing cleanup systems for treatment.

Using a computer model to predict the radius of capture for the system, SFPP and DFSC designed the system to ensure the system will be an effective barrier. Effectiveness will be monitored by regular measuring of adjacent monitoring wells. If the system is working as planned, chemical concentrations should drop in wells west of Norwalk Boulevard.

Field construction of the barrier system began in May 1996, with system start-up planned in October 1996. Once the barrier system is in place, the source of off-site contamination will be contained and treated. The next step, currently in the formulation stage, is the off-site 1,2-DCA (see below). ■

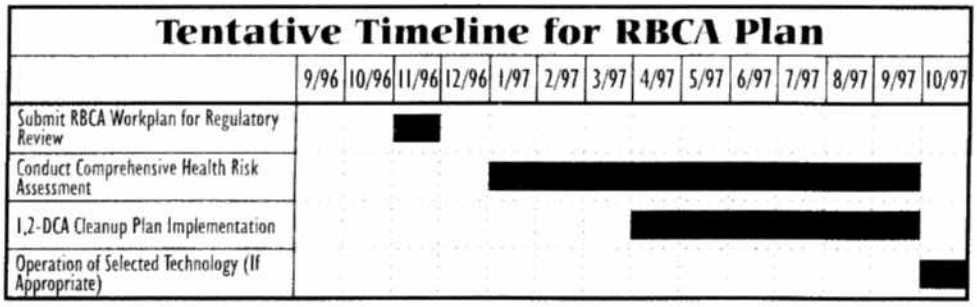
Western Off-Site 1,2-DCA Plume Addressed at RAB Meeting

A special Restoration Advisory Board meeting was held on June 6, 1996 to discuss a conceptual plan for addressing the western off-site 1,2-DCA plume. The plan calls for a Risked Based Corrective Action (RBCA). A subcommittee is being formed and its members will work together to prepare a detailed workplan for the RBCA. Subcommittee membership will consist of two RAB community members and one representative each from DTSC, RWQCB, City of Norwalk, SFPP, and DFSC. Membership will also include two representatives from academia to provide third party expertise, ensure impartiality, validate scientific process, and peer review.

The RBCA plan for the 1,2-DCA plume will serve several purposes, including:

- Providing a process to scientifically determine a feasible and acceptable cleanup goal
- Defining an end point to 1,2-DCA cleanup off-site based on the cleanup goal
- Aiding decision-making by providing evaluation of feasible technologies for control and cleanup of the 1,2-DCA plume

Currently, most of the mass of the plume remains on-site, and the barrier plan will prevent more mass from moving off-site. The average concentration of the off-site portion is a relatively low 90 parts per billion. The subcommittee will also look into MTBE (see article on page 4) as part of their duties. ■



Groundwater Monitoring Program Update

DFSC and SFPP recently completed the latest semiannual groundwater monitoring report for the DFSP Norwalk Tank Farm. Site-wide sampling occurred in January 1994, March 1995, and August 1995. Groundwater sampling was done for the three primary plumes: TPH; benzene; and 1,2-DCA (see glossary).

March 1995 Sampling Results

According to the March 1995 sampling results, concentrations in the northwest portion of the TPH plume decreased since January 1994. Concentrations of TPH remained relatively unchanged, however, throughout the remainder of the plume. Benzene concentrations increased in the majority of wells. However, no westward expansion was noted and no benzene was found in the western off-site wells. There were no significant changes in any of the south-central plumes. The 1,2-DCA plume appeared similar in size to the January 1994 sampling.

August 1995 Sampling Results

The August 1995 sampling event results showed that TPH concentrations in the central portion generally increased since the March 1995 sampling. Levels of benzene increased in the majority of the wells, but the boundaries of the benzene plumes remained relatively unchanged since March 1995. 1,2-DCA concentrations increased in westside off-site wells, suggesting the plume may be moving slowly downgradient. 1,2-DCA concentrations in some south-side wells decreased with concentrations in the remainder of the 1,2-DCA plumes remaining similar to previous sampling events.

Semiannual site-wide sampling is continuing in 1996. The number of monitoring wells chosen for the first 1996 sampling event increased at the suggestion of the Restoration Advisory Board. Field work began in late May, and the final report is due in September. Field work for the second site-wide sampling of 1996 is scheduled to begin in November. ■

RAB members observe SFPP remediation equipment at the southern portion of Tank Farm

Points of Contact

Claire T. Best
Public Participation Supervisor
California Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4
Department of Toxic Substances Control
245 West Broadway
Suite 425
Long Beach, CA 90802
(310) 590-4949
(310) 590-4932 FAX

Hugh Marley
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Los Angeles Region
101 Centre Plaza Drive
Monterey Park, CA 91754
(213) 266-7669
(213) 266-7600 FAX

Joe Trani
Environmental Engineer
Defense Fuel Office-Los Angeles
3171 North Gaffey Street
San Pedro, CA 90731-1099
(310) 335-3090, ext. 106
(310) 335-3099 FAX

Tom Danaher
Staff Environmental Engineer
Santa Fe Pacific Pipelines
1100 Town and Country Road
Orange, CA 92868
(714) 560-4863
(714) 560-4884 FAX

Tim Whyte
Public Involvement Specialist
Woodward-Clyde Federal Services
2020 East First Street
Suite 400
Santa Ana, CA 92705
(714) 835-6886
(714) 558-0784 FAX

Smog-Cutting Fuel Additive MTBE Monitored at Tank Farm

Methyl Tertiary Butyl Ether, otherwise known as MTBE, is an automobile fuel additive used to reduce smog. Patented by ARCO in the 1960s, the first commercial production of MTBE occurred in 1979 as lead was phased out of gasoline. In 1990, the Clean Air Act Amendments required fuel oxygenates be added to gasoline to reduce smog. MTBE is the most commonly added fuel oxygenate.

As of 1995, 29 percent of gasoline in the U.S. contained MTBE with an average blend of 12 percent. An estimated 90 percent of California's gasoline now contains MTBE to meet the state's stringent air pollution standards. It helps to remove 520 tons of carbon monoxide every day from Southern California's air.

Concerns about possible health effects prompted initiation of studies which are ongoing. Pending completion of these studies, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency classified MTBE as a possible human cancer-casing agent. Recently, MTBE was detected in municipal supply wells in Orange County and Santa Monica.

MTBE was detected in groundwater at the Tank Farm on the southeast side and in parts of the south-central plume. Concentrations range from 4.2 parts per billion to 17 parts per million. MTBE is a newer chemical, only added in the last five to nine years to fuels transported through SFPP pipelines. However, SFPP representatives believe current remediation systems in place will be able to treat it. MTBE will be monitored closely. ■

GLOSSARY

Benzene: A chemical found in fuel. A known cancer-causing agent.

Downgradient: The direction in which groundwater flows. Generally northwest in Norwalk.

MTBE: Methyl Tertiary Butyl Ether. A newer fuel additive used to reduce smog.

1,2-DCA: 1,2-Dichloroethane. A lead-scavenger that used to be added to fuels; also commonly used as an industrial cleaning agent and for pest and weed control. A known cancer-causing agent.

TPH: Total petroleum hydrocarbons. TPH is a measure of the amount of a given petroleum product, for example gasoline, jet fuel, diesel, motor oil, or lubricants.

Defense Fuel Office - Los Angeles
3171 North Gaffey Street
San Pedro, CA 90731-1099