

St. Paul Ford Site - Area C

HEALTH CONSULTATION MEMO SUMMARY

Up to the mid-1960's, the Ford Motor Company in St. Paul dumped their waste, including paint sludge and solvents used in auto painting operations, at the base of the bluff adjacent to the Mississippi River. This former dump is now referred to as Area C. Most the waste is buried under 40 to 60 feet of soil and construction debris. As a result, there are contaminants in soil and groundwater at Area C.

At the request of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) staff reviewed the site data to assess the possibility of community exposure to contaminants and health risks related to Area C.

MDH considered all the ways people could come into contact with contamination in or released from the buried waste, including direct contact, recreational use of the Mississippi River, fish consumption, and breathing outdoor air and soil vapor.

Conclusions

MDH concluded that only minimal risks exist if trespassers contact contaminants in soil or physical hazards present at Area C.

There are no other ways for people to come into contact with the buried waste or be exposed to harmful amounts of contaminants released from it:

- The groundwater is not used for drinking water.
- Groundwater contaminants have a negligible impact on the Mississippi River surface water quality.
- There is no evidence or expectation that Area C contamination caused or contributed to the need for fish consumption advice.
- There are no contaminants in the top foot of soil that could evaporate into the air and affect outdoor air quality.
- There are no buildings above or near Area C that could be affected by vapor intrusion (chemicals moving up through soil and contaminating indoor air).

Recommendations

- To discourage trespassing, consider repairing the fence and adding signage between the Hidden Falls Regional Park walking trail and the southern boundary of Area C.
- Consider removal of potential physical hazards and soil contamination from the southern slope.
- Continue monitoring the groundwater to demonstrate the ongoing negligible impact of any contamination moving from Area C to the Mississippi River via the groundwater pathway.

Additional Information

Soil Vapor on the Main Parcel

Shallow groundwater contamination beneath the main parcel is a potential source of soil vapor contaminants. The MPCA has required that soil vapor samples be collected within the footprint of each building on the main parcel before it is constructed. If soil vapors are present and pose a potential hazard, vapor mitigation systems will be installed.

Fish Consumption from the Mississippi River

MDH develops Safe-Eating Guidelines to help consumers to minimize their exposure to contaminants in fish while promoting the benefits of eating fish. MDH has specific advice on eating fish from the segment of the Mississippi River extending from the Ford Dam to Hastings due to mercury, PCBs, and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS). Anglers who fish near Area C should be aware of and follow the guidelines that can be found on the MDH webpage, [Fish Consumption Guidance](http://www.health.state.mn.us/fish), <http://www.health.state.mn.us/fish>.

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