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EPA schedules open house for Oct. 27-28 To answer questions on Minden soil sampling results

PHILADELPHIA (October 12, 2017) – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will hold two open house sessions on Oct. 27 and 28 in Glen Jean, West Virginia to answer questions about soil and water sampling conducted this past summer at three locations around Minden, West Virginia that detected low levels of Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs).

The open house sessions will be held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Oct. 27 and 9 a.m. to noon on Oct. 28 at the National Guard Armory, 409 Wood Mountain Road, Glen Jean. Representatives from EPA, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection and West Virginia Bureau of Public Health will be available to answer questions about sampling results and health concerns. EPA has reached out directly to property owners this week to share results from samples that were collected on their properties.

EPA conducted the sampling this past summer in response to concerns from residents about potential health effects from the former Shaffer Equipment Company site where EPA conducted cleanup work in 2002. EPA's work in 2002 included excavating soil and constructing a cap over about one acre of the six-acre site that included the remains of a demolished building and some remaining contaminated soil. Recent sampling indicates that EPA's work at the cap site has limited the spread of PCBs.

The former Shaffer Equipment Company used the site to manufacture equipment used in mining that included transformers and other electrical equipment that contained PCBs.

Sampling at Shaffer Equipment and surrounding area: EPA collected soil, sediment, surface water and ground water samples from the Shaffer Equipment Site and for approximately one mile down from the site.

Of the 41 soil samples, there were two samples collected at residences that were above 1 parts per million (ppm), which represents the residential cleanup level for this site. These two samples were 1.2 ppm and 1.3ppm. Of the 25 sediment samples from Arbuckle Creek, there were two samples that detected PCBs above the 1 ppm level (50 ppm and 6.2 ppm). All the water samples were below risk levels.

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EPA's next step is to conduct additional sampling to determine the extent of contamination around areas that exceeded the cleanup level, and determine if there is a different contributor because the highest result is approximately one-half mile from the Shaffer Equipment site.

Sampling at Fayetteville site: EPA contractors conducted a ground penetrating radar survey in May of the property in nearby Fayetteville where residents had concerns that a tanker truck containing PCBs may have been buried. The survey detected multiple metal anomalies including one that was the potentially the size of a tanker or underground storage tank.

EPA followed up by collecting soil samples 1 to 5 feet deep around the area and collected water samples from an outfall of the property. Results showed one sample with PCBs at a concentration of 0.150 ppm. The PCBs detected are a different type than those at the Shaffer Equipment site and the concentration is well below the cleanup level. EPA will have no further action at this location.

Sampling around an unnamed tributary: EPA also collected soil and surface water samples from an unnamed tributary that runs along an area where residents provided information about a former dump location. This tributary runs into Arbuckle Creek.

The initial results showed low concentrations of PCBs, pesticides, and Dioxin in the sediments adjacent to the landfill but not further downstream. Some metal contaminants such as lead were also detected. The surface water was not impacted. EPA is still collecting additional information and awaiting additional analytical results before making any determinations.

For more information on EPA's response efforts at Shaffer Equipment Site and surrounding areas in Minden, visit: <https://response.epa.gov/ShafferEquipmentCompany>

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