

News Release

Region 2 - New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands



EPA Releases Health Risk Assessment of Processing and Disposal of Onondaga Lake Sediment in Town of Camillus

Open House/Public Meeting to Discuss the Assessment on July 8, 2010 in Camillus, NY

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(New York, New York – June 17, 2010) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today released a supplemental Human Health Risk Assessment that evaluates the safety of disposing of contaminated sediment from Onondaga Lake in Wastebed 13 in Camillus, NY designated to receive this type of material. The risk assessment, conducted in response to concerns raised by residents and requests from elected officials, looked at potential risks associated with the operation of the new facility. The assessment found no significant health risks to local residents.

The decision to take an action to remove contaminated sediment in the lake was supported by the prior risk assessments, which documented unacceptable risks to people consuming fish from the lake and to plants, fish and wildlife in and near the lake.

The cleanup plan for Onondaga Lake calls for contaminated sediment to be vacuumed from the lake, piped to the sediment consolidation area at Wastebed 13, and then into plastic tubes. The water that drains from the sediment will be collected and treated. The tubes will be enclosed in a lined area at the wastebed. The lined area will then be capped, maintained, and monitored to ensure that it does not damage the environment. As designed and constructed, the "Sediment Consolidation Area" contains several layers of containment.

EPA assessed the potential risks posed by the management and dewatering of lake sediment that will take place at Wastebed 13. In its assessment, EPA evaluated two potential exposure scenarios. The

first scenario that was evaluated was exposure to contaminants by air as a result of chemicals volatilizing from the dredged sediment and from the water draining from the geotextile tubes. The second exposure scenario that was assessed was an unlikely hypothetical situation that assumes a significant failure of the Sediment Consolidation Area. In this scenario, sediment is released and individuals would come onto Wastebed 13 and contact the sediments on or near the Sediment Consolidation Area daily for a 45 day period until the sediment is cleaned up and the affected area is repaired.

All resulting estimated risks were within levels identified by EPA as acceptable. The finding of acceptable risk estimates when applying health protective assumptions suggests that the plans for the sediment consolidation area will not result in unacceptable risks for the surrounding community

The supplemental Human Health Risk Assessment can be found at:

<http://www.epa.gov/region02/superfund/npl/0203382c.htm> and at the locations listed below.

EPA and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation will hold an open house at the Martha Eddy Room at the New York State Fairgrounds in Syracuse, NY on July 8, 2010 at 5:30 pm and a public meeting at 6:30 pm to discuss the risk assessment and to answer questions from the public. Written questions may be submitted in advance of the meeting so as to facilitate the question and answer segment of the meeting. Questions can be submitted to EPA electronically at nunes.robert@epa.gov in advance. Questions can be submitted as well, during and after the meeting.

The HRRA is also available through the following local locations: Atlantic States Legal Foundation, 658 W. Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY 13204; Camillus Town Hall, 4600 W. Genesee Street, Room 100, Syracuse, NY 13204; Liverpool Public Library, 310 Tulip Street, Liverpool, NY 13088; Moon Library, SUNY ESF, 1 Forestry Drive, Syracuse, NY 13210; Onondaga County Public Library – Central Library at the Galleries, 447 South Salina Street, Syracuse NY 13202; Solvay Public Library; 615 Woods Road, Solvay, NY 13209; NYSDEC, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233; NYSDEC Region 7, 615 Erie Boulevard West, Syracuse, NY 13204.

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