

Offers clarification on Lew-Port arsenic comments

Editor's Note: The following is in response to an Editor's Note contained in the letter, "Offers comments on CWM article."

I would like to repeat what my exact comments about the sources of arsenic found on the Lew-Port schools campus.

- I have not determined that the Lew-Port arsenic source was orchard spraying; it remains an open issue since there has not yet been a review of historical information that could be conclusive. I indicated in my comments to the School Board that residents have put forward this explanation based on their recollections. I cannot comment on the veracity of those recollections.

- The testing that was done cannot determine what the source of arsenic (or any chemical) is; the test simply provides a description and concentration values for what is there presently. I was not engaged to determine the source, but rather to identify problems and assist with recommendations for remediation where appropriate.

- The initial phase of testing was not designed to be a comprehensive,

site-wide study for all chemical contaminants of potential concern at the LOOW site – that would be far more costly. It was rather an approach to target select surface locations, based on requests from the community, and test for EPA priority pollutants, metals, PCBs, combustion residues such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons [PAHs], pesticide residues, and other chemicals used by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers as tracers of former defense department activities.

- The planned second phase of testing was limited to a small area where consistent testing found elevated levels of arsenic and small areas of PAHs, to determine an area and depth for remediation planning.

Neither of these approaches was meant to determine the source of contamination, simply to identify whether contamination was at levels of concern in surface soils; the most prominent for exposure on site from the soil.

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