In an effort to address some of the public concerns, MDEQ has tried to provide answers to the most frequently asked questions about the assessment of the property. If you have any other questions, please contact Jerry Banks at (601)961-5221.

Question 1. Has the area's drinking water been contaminated by chemicals released to the shallow groundwater at the facility?
No. There is no threat to the area's drinking water supply.

Question 2. How does the MDEQ know that the shallow groundwater contamination will not impact the area's drinking water supply or a private well?
The shallow groundwater contamination has a layer of clay under it that is 100 to 150 feet thick that prevents contamination from reaching the drinking water aquifer.

Question 3. What are the main contaminants of concern?
The main contaminants of concern are pentachlorophenol, and dioxins/furans.

Question 4. What is pentachlorophenol?
Pentachlorophenol is a synthetic or man-made substance that is made from other chemicals. Some of the toxic impurities of concern found in pentachlorophenol are commonly called dioxins/furans.

Question 5. What are the most common sources of pentachlorophenol?
The most common source of pentachlorophenol is as a wood preserving chemical. Other minor sources are its uses in household pesticides.

Question 6. How can one be exposed to pentachlorophenol?
The exposure routes are air emissions from wood preserving plants and contact with surface water, groundwater, soils, or other materials contaminated from wood preserving plant operations.

Question 7. How can pentachlorophenol affect my health?
The most obvious health effect from exposure to pentachlorophenol is skin, eye, and/or mouth irritation.

Question 8. What are dioxins/furans?
Dioxins/furans are a family of over 100 different compounds commonly referred to as polychlorinated dioxins/furans.

Question 9. What are the most common sources of dioxins/furans?
The most common sources are from the burning of coal, oil, natural gas, and wood. They have also been detected in cigarette smoke and vehicle exhausts. The dioxins/furans are a toxic contaminant found in pentachlorophenol.

Question 10. How can one be exposed to dioxins/furans?
Dioxins/furans are found everywhere in the environment, and most people are exposed when they breathe air, consume milk or food, or have skin contact with contaminated materials containing dioxins/furans.

Question 11. How can dioxins/furans affect my health?
Dioxins/furans are carcinogens, which means they have been shown to cause cancer. The most obvious effect from exposure to high levels of dioxins/furans is chloracne, a severe skin disease characterized by acne-like lesions.

Question 12. Have citizens or residents in the area been exposed to wood preserving chemicals?
It is possible that some residents may have been exposed in the past from consumption of contaminated fish.

Question 13. Are the fish in Country Club Estates Lake contaminated?
No, sampling of fish by MDEQ determined that the fish were safe for consumption and the 1987 fish advisory on the lake was removed in June 2001. Due to ongoing concerns of the public, MDEQ resampled the fish in February 2004. Fish tissue analysis results (presented in the adjacent table) indicated that the fish are safe for human consumption.

Question 14. What actions are to be taken in the near future regarding the site?
The EPA plans to complete the ecological risk assessment and the remedial investigation of the site by the end of 2004.

Question 15. What future actions will be taken regarding the site?
The next step will be the completion of a feasibility study where the EPA will evaluate numerous cleanup strategies for the site and propose a cleanup strategy for the site. The cleanup strategy for the site will be recorded in a proposed plan which is expected to be completed in 2005. Once the site cleanup strategy has been approved, the EPA will complete a record of decision that records the cleanup strategy and reason for its selection. At this point, the next steps are remedial design and the actual site cleanup or remediation.

Question 16. When will the site remediation begin?
The site remediation will begin after the remedial design is complete and the site remediation is funded.

Country Club Lake, Fish Tissue Analysis 1987-2004
(MSDEQ Safe Consumption Dioxin TEQ is 5 pg/g)

DATE	SPECIES	TISSUE TYPE	Dioxin TEQ (pg/g)
Dec-87	Hybrid Sunfish	Whole	156.7
Dec-87	Largemouth Bass	Fillet	103.2
Apr-90	Spotted Sunfish	Composite	7.5
Apr-90	Spotted Sunfish	Unknown	3.5
Jun-91	Bluegill	Fillet	4.7
Jun-91	Brown Bullhead	Fillet	4.9
Jun-91	Largemouth Bass	Fillet	4.4
Apr-93	Largemouth Bass	Fillet	8.0
Apr-93	Largemouth Bass	Fillet	6.2
Apr-93	Warmouth	Fillet	1.1
Sep-97	Largemouth Bass	Fillet	1.3
Sep-97	Largemouth Bass	Fillet	0.72
Sep 97	Channel Catfish	Fillet	21.01
Jul-00	Largemouth Bass	Fillet	5.85
Jul-00	Largemouth Bass	Fillet	0.66
Jul-00	Largemouth Bass	Fillet	0.076
Jul-00	Largemouth Bass	Fillet	0.188
Jul-00	Bluegill	Fillet	1.2
Feb-04	Largemouth Bass	Fillet	0.26
Feb-04	Largemouth Bass	Fillet	0.23
Feb-04	Black Crappie	Fillet	0.81
Feb-04	Bluegill	Fillet	0.23

Site History

The Davis Timber Company site of about 30 acres is located on Jackson Road approximately six miles northwest of Hattiesburg, MS. Davis Timber Company conducted timber processing and wood preserving operations at the facility from 1972 until 1987, when the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) ordered them to cease operations. The company filed for bankruptcy in 1990.

Davis Timber Company produced treated pine poles, pilings and timber. Facility operations included bark removal, pressure treatment with pentachlorophenol (PCP), and product storage. During operations, Davis Timber Company discharged process wastewater containing PCP into an on-site storage pond. The storage pond was intentionally drained on occasion and would overflow during heavy rain events, releasing PCP contaminated wastewater into East and West Mineral Creek. In 1980, the storage pond was reportedly closed, backfilled, and capped with approximately six to eight inches of clay.

Between 1974 and 1987, MDEQ noted many violations and issued orders to Davis Timber Company for improper operations at the facility. Numerous fish kills were reported in Country Club Estates Lake, a 66-acre lake located approximately one mile downstream of the Davis Timber Company. In 1987, MDEQ issued a fish advisory for Country Club Estates Lake due to high levels of dioxin in fish tissue samples collected from the lake. In 1989, the MDEQ petitioned the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), to conduct a public health assessment at Country Club Estates Lake on behalf of the residents of Country Club Estates. In the Public Health Assessment released in January 1993, ATSDR classified Country Club Estates Lake as a public health hazard based on the concentrations of PCP and chlorinated dibenzodioxins (dioxins), and dibenzofurans (furans) detected in the lake. The Davis Timber Company site was proposed for the National Priorities List (NPL) on May 11, 2000, and listed on the NPL on July 27, 2000. The NPL is the list of hazardous waste sites throughout the United States that have a high priority for cleanup under the federal Superfund program. After resampling of the fish in Country Club Estates Lake by MDEQ and finding the fish safe for consumption, MDEQ removed the fish advisory for the lake in June 2001. MDEQ resampled the fish in early 2004 and again found the fish in the lake to be safe for consumption.

A July 2002 report by the EPA compiled all data collected during the remedial investigation conducted between 2000 and 2002. The data indicated the presence of contamination (predominantly dioxins and semi-related pentachlorophenol (PCP) compounds) in the on-site soils at the former pentachlorophenol (PCP) impoundment and in sediments predominantly in East Mineral Creek.

The present focus of the remedial investigation phase of the project, which is to determine the risk and extent of contamination on and off-site, is the completion of an ecological risk assessment. The EPA conducted ecological sampling in August 2004 and data from the field effort is expected to be available in the Fall 2004, that will allow completion of the ecological risk assessment and complete the remedial investigation phase by the end of 2004.

The next step will be the feasibility study in which the EPA will evaluate numerous cleanup strategies for the site and propose a cleanup strategy to be reviewed and commented on by the public and state officials.

The cleanup strategy will be recorded in a proposed plan, which is expected to be completed in 2005. Once the site cleanup strategy has been approved, the EPA will complete a record of decision that records the cleanup strategy and the reason for its selection. After approval of the record of decision, the remedial design will take place, and the site will be ready for cleanup.

If you have any additional questions, please contact:

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If you believe that you have been exposed to pentachlorophenol and are experiencing adverse health problems, we recommend that you contact your physician.

Mississippi Department of ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Information Update

For the Davis Timber Site

MDEQ strives to preserve and protect Mississippi's air, land, and water through fair and responsible regulation.

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