

EPA Answers Your Questions; Expands Sampling Area and Extends Deadline to Get Tested

Valley Pike VOC Site

Riverside, Ohio

November 2014

For more information

For questions, comments or more information about the Valley Pike VOC site removal action you can contact these EPA team members:

For technical questions:

Steve Renninger

On-Scene Coordinator
Emergency Response Branch
26 W. Martin Luther King Drive
Cincinnati, OH 45268
937-237-7530
renninger.steven@epa.gov

EPA Local Project Office

2049 Harshman Road
Riverside, OH 45424
937-237-7530



EPA staff is available at the Project Office to answer questions.

For general questions:

Ginny Narsete

Community Involvement Coordinator
EPA Region 5 Chicago Office
Superfund Division
77 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604
312-886-4359
narsete.virginia@epa.gov

EPA Region 5 toll-free:

800-621-8431,
9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., weekdays

For more information, please visit the following website:

www.epa.gov/region5/cleanup/valleypikevocsite

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has been busy sampling residences near the Valley Pike Superfund site and installing vapor abatement systems on structures that need them. The VAS is very similar to a radon removal system common to many Midwestern houses. The process includes installing a sub-slab or crawl space depressurization system, sealing cracks in walls and basement floors and includes air sampling to verify the VAS is working properly. Since December 2013, EPA sampled over 271 residences and installed 70 VAS.



This photograph shows a VAS installed on the outside of this house.

Sampling area expanded, project dates extended

Based on recent residential sampling data, EPA has again expanded the area of concern (*see map on P.4*) in the Valley Pike site farther west to Sagamore Avenue.

EPA also extended the project dates. You now have until **March 30, 2015**, to turn in a signed access agreement to have your property sampled.

Access still needed

EPA needs signed permission from property owners and tenants (residential only) to do the vapor sampling in order to determine if vapor intrusion is occurring in residences. If the structure is a rental property, both the owner and the tenant must sign the access agreement. Completion of the access form is required for either consent (which allows EPA to test) or denial. If you have not completed an access agreement and live within the Site boundaries, please contact EPA at one of the phone numbers in the box to the left or stop in the EPA Local Project Office as soon as possible. Installation of the VAS if needed is a free service.

Answers to frequently asked questions

As EPA continues work on the Valley Pike VOC site, many of the same questions have been asked by residents and other community members.

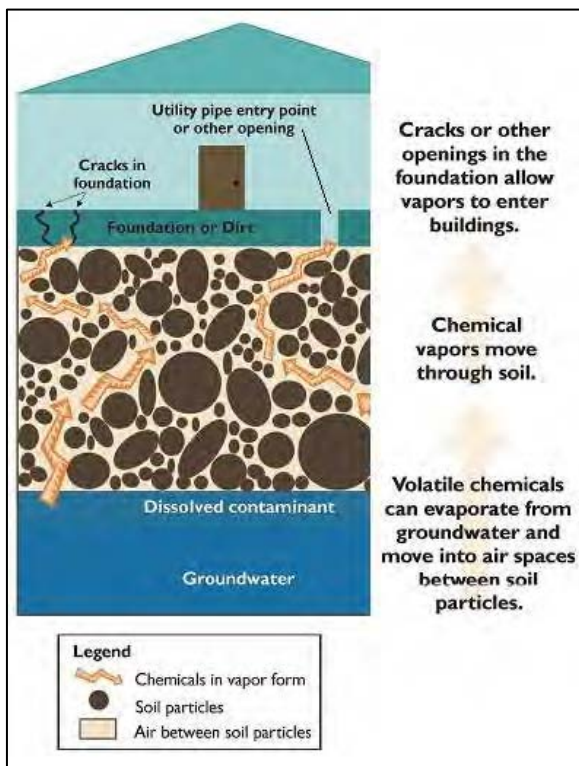
This fact sheet provides answers to these most frequently asked questions.

1. **What is vapor intrusion?**

Vapor intrusion occurs when underground pollutants release chemical vapors that travel up through the soil, accumulate beneath building foundations and cause indoor air pollution when the chemical vapors enter buildings through cracks or holes in foundations and crawl spaces. Measuring the amount of chemical vapors under the sub-slab or within the crawl space of the property can indicate the potential for a vapor intrusion problem.

2. **How did these vapors get into my basement?**

Volatile organic compounds, or VOCs, called tetrachloroethylene, or PCE, and trichloroethylene, or TCE, were used as industrial solvents in the area. In a July 2013 sampling project, elevated concentrations of PCE and TCE were discovered in the groundwater and the soil gas beneath the Riverside neighborhood. Elevated PCE and TCE vapors were also discovered accumulating under the foundation in 70 residences in the neighborhood. Unsafe indoor air concentrations of PCE and TCE were also detected in residences. The diagram below shows how vapors can enter a house.



3. **How do you sample my house to find out if I have a problem?**

Sub-slab or crawl space sampling is performed to find vapor intrusion problems. For residences with a basement floor, sub-slab testing is performed with probes that are temporarily installed in the house slab



Photograph shows a SUMMA canister used to collect a sub-slab sample.

and attached to a test canister to sample VOC vapors trapped under the house. Crawl space sampling is completed by placing a test canister inside the crawl space.

4. **If I do not get the system in my house, is my health at risk?**

In order to evaluate your potential health risk, we would need to know what your sub-slab or crawl space air concentrations are. Residents whose houses test for sub-slab or crawl space TCE or PCE vapors in greater concentrations than ATSDR screening levels are offered a treatment system. If you were not offered a system but still have concerns, we would encourage you to call the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, or ATSDR, to discuss the results of your sub-slab or crawl space air sampling. If you were offered a treatment system because your indoor air levels of TCE and PCE were elevated and chose not to have it installed, you could be at increased risk for health effects. Michelle Colledge at ATSDR (312-886-1462) is available to discuss any health concerns you have given your indoor air results.

5. **If I am a renter, what do I need to do to encourage my landlord to sign the access agreement to get my home tested?**

U.S. EPA requires property owners and renters to sign an access agreement for vapor intrusion sampling. U.S. EPA and other agencies have reached out and contacted the owners when their contact information was made available. If a renter is having an issue with the property owner signing the access agreement, U.S. EPA or the city can contact the property owner and explain the importance of testing.

6. **Can the city of Riverside or the health department take action against the landowner if they choose not to sign the access agreement?**

The city cannot take any action against the landowner if they choose not to grant access.

7. *If my landlord will not sign the access agreement can I move out and stop my lease?*

This is a legal question, and it would be in the best interest of the tenant to seek a legal opinion.

8. *When will we be notified if we need a second round of sampling?*

EPA will contact property owners about a second round of sampling in winter 2014-2015.

9. *How long will the residential mitigation system have to run?*

The VAS will be required until the groundwater source is cleaned up. The groundwater is the source of VOC vapors.

10. *What is the potential operational timeframe or lifetime of the equipment?*

The VAS fans are warranted for five years. In similar projects, fans have been operational for 10-plus years.

11. *What happens if the system breaks down? Who pays for repairs?*

After installation, the property owner owns the VAS, and after the five-year warranty expires, any repairs would be the responsibility of the property owner.

12. *Are PCE and TCE vapors getting into the drinking water lines?*

No, the drinking water, which comes from the city of Dayton's public water supply, is not affected by these site conditions.

13. *Is there a monthly charge for the EPA installed mitigation system?*

There is no monthly charge from EPA for the installed system. You may see about a \$6 – \$7 per month increase in your electric bill from the fan operation.

14. *Are houses being condemned based on sampling results?*

No.

15. *If I have a private water well, can it be used?*

Contact Tom Hut at the Dayton-Montgomery County Health Department (937-225-4439) about private well use.

16. *Why did some houses only get sub-slab samples and not indoor air samples taken?*

If a residence has a basement floor, a sub-slab sample is the most accurate vapor intrusion sample. If there is no basement floor, a crawl space or indoor air sample is obtained.

17. *Why are some houses not contaminated and they are next to houses that are?*

There are many factors to be considered in why one house has contamination and another does not. Cracks in the foundation, having a basement or crawl space, or settling of the house can affect whether the indoor air is contaminated or not.

18. *How do I contact the EPA Project Office?*

See the box on the left-hand side of the front page for the location and phone number of the Project Office.

19. *Is this contamination at Valley Pike related to the Valleycrest Landfill problem?*

No. The Valleycrest Landfill site is downhill of the Valley Pike VOC site and therefore Valleycrest pollutants cannot affect the Valle Pike neighborhood.

20. *Who is responsible for the contamination? What is EPA doing about getting them to pay?*

EPA continues to conduct a search to identify potentially responsible parties.

21. *How do I get information about this site?*

EPA has a website that provides updated and contact information about this site. It is www.epa.gov/region5/cleanup/valleypikevocsite.

An information repository that contains official documents about the site is available at the EC Doren Public Library. You can also visit the EPA Project Office (address in the left-hand box on the front page) to get information or talk with staff there about your questions or concerns.

You may also contact your city council. EPA staff has been communicating with them on a regular basis and they are helping to encourage residents to sign access agreements.



U.S. EPA staff meets with city of Riverside officials about the Valley Pike VOC site.




United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Region 5
Superfund Division (SI-7J)
77 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604-3590

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