



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**  
**REGION IX**  
**75 Hawthorne Street**  
**San Francisco, CA 94105**

Telephone Call Summary

Facility: US Filter Westates

Date of Call: May 31, 2006

Person Calling: wishes that we keep name confidential for privacy reasons

Person Called: Karen Scheuermann, Waste Management Division  
EPA Region 9

A caller contacted me in response to the public notice appearing in the Parker Pioneer on May 31, 2006. The public notice pertained to the Area of Potential Effects for the NHPA process for the permit decision at US Filter Westates. The caller was concerned that the 1-mile radius proposed in the public notice was not big enough to allow for adequate analysis of health effects from Westates. The caller believed EPA should include Parker schools within the area. I explained that the risk assessment would include an area up to 20 miles around Westates, and that the 1-mile radius applied only to the NHPA process and historic properties.

The caller said that if the 1-mile radius was relevant only to the NHPA process, then the caller was not so concerned. However, the caller offered the following comments regarding NHPA:

The caller thought that contaminants from Westates could possibly affect historic properties greater than 1 mile from Westates.

The caller wondered why the Tribe would request a smaller APE that excludes Black Peak, when the Tribe has prohibited the "P" on Black Peak from being painted again. The caller said that this was presumably because Black Peak was a sacred mountain.

The caller thought there may be a Tribal cultural site within the 1-mile radius: the "Virginia Hills", which is an area of sand dunes. The caller said that the old wagon trail into Parker took a jog around the dunes.

The caller's primary concern was for health effects from Westates. The caller emphasized the following points:

### Odors from Westates

Bad smells come from Westates primarily on weekends or late at night. It's a chemical or ether kind of smell, and makes people sick with allergy-like symptoms, even when it's not allergy season. These smells did not occur before Westates began operating.

The caller has noticed these smells at the airport when winds are from the south, and could tell that the smells were coming from Westates. Prevailing winds are from the south and blow the smells upriver. Sometimes the wind blows from the north, in which case the smells are noticeable in Parker.

Also if there is cloud cover or if the wind stops, the smell is noticeable in Parker, and more kids in town get sick during these times. The smells are also evident at a senior citizen apartment complex which is near the schools.

The caller has notified the Parker Police with complaints about the smells.

### Health effects from Westates

The caller said that if bad smells from Westates reach Parker and surrounding areas, that means "residuals" or contaminants from Westates will also reach those areas. We need to think what health effects these residuals will cause. Will they cause cancer?

"Residuals" will also get into the soil, and this will cause health problems in the future, and will affect land values. The soils would need to be cleaned up.

We need to think about the kids and grandkids when looking at the contaminants from Westates.

### Air emissions test

What reagents or residuals are coming out of the stack?

Westates would not be allowed to conduct their own air emissions test if it were located in a more affluent community like Paradise Valley. We should have a third disinterested party to check what is going on at Westates and conduct the test.

Have we ever scraped the inside of the stack to find out about the residuals there? A teacher from the school (and employee at Westates?) collected soot from the facility and because of that he got fired from the school.

### Wastes received

What's in the waste? There should be a "diagnostic sheet" on the waste.

There is waste that Westates takes in that they don't report to EPA.

The trucks coming in to Westates that look like "milk trucks" – some of them are corroded out.

### Other comments

Why is Westates located so far away from the source of the waste? It should be in the same location where the waste is generated.

The caller is not demanding that Westates be shut down, but wants to know whether it's safe.

### Other information offered

There is a "cancer cell" on the Reservation near Poston across from the internment camp memorial, due to PCB transformers dumped there.

Westates had a smaller operation on the Reservation prior to 1990 – the caller thinks it was operating as Wheelabrator.

Westates (or Wheelabrator) had to move out of Nevada and so came to the Reservation – caller said this was maybe just a rumor.

I offered to send the caller fact sheets about Westates' operations, and information on waste received and stack emissions, but the caller declined.