

VAPOR INTRUSION GUIDANCE: COMMUNITY OUTREACH



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Benefits of Community Outreach

Effective community outreach:

- ◆ builds trust and credibility with citizens/local officials
- ◆ helps prevent roadblocks in the remedial process

Plan your community outreach strategy early



Communicating with the Public

- ◆ Local officials - municipal and health officials
- ◆ General public - occupants/property owners and other interested parties
- ◆ Media - if site becomes high profile

*Remember to use non-technical terms and
avoid jargon*



Public Concerns

- ◆ Health effects
- ◆ Property values
- ◆ Unfamiliarity with the concept of vapor intrusion
- ◆ Residents are directly affected, so more frequent contact is needed
- ◆ Stigma/confidentiality



Vapor Intrusion Outreach

- ◆ arranging sampling appointments
- ◆ collecting samples
- ◆ reporting findings
- ◆ facilitating remedial actions
- ◆ holding public meetings



Arranging Sampling Appointments

Step 1: Introductory letter

- Send several weeks before sampling event
- Explain reason for sampling and provide general information
- For rental properties, send to occupant and owner
- Include access agreement if necessary

*Give local officials a list of occupants/
property owners contacted*



Arranging Sampling Appointments

Step 2: Phone call to occupant

- Give at least two weeks notice
- Be prepared to discuss sampling details and when they will get their results
- Review “Instructions for Occupants – Indoor Air Sampling”
- Review “Indoor Air Building Survey and Sampling Form”

Follow-up appointments just require a phone call



Collecting Samples

Make sure someone is available to answer the occupants' questions



Reporting Sampling Results

NJDEP officially notifies occupants/property owner of their results

NJDEP may provide verbal notification of their results first if:

- contaminant(s) of concern exceed Rapid Action Levels
- high levels of background contamination
- more than two months since sampling occurred



Written Notification

Written notification consists of:

- ◆ cover letter that explains the findings in non-technical terms
- ◆ table that clearly summarizes the analytical results

Inform property owner of Property Disclosure Requirements (if vapor intrusion is occurring)



Outreach During Remedial Actions

- ◆ Scheduling installation of remedial system
- ◆ Relaying property owner/occupant's concerns to appropriate individuals
- ◆ Ensuring owner/occupant's issues or concerns are resolved whenever possible

Completed remedial systems should be as inconspicuous as possible



When a Public Meeting is Needed

- ◆ The earlier in the process the better
- ◆ Meet as often as needed

Possible Meeting Formats:

- Local council meeting
- Formal presentation with question/answer period
- Open house or “public availability session”



Additional Information

- ◆ **USEPA guidance:** *Risk Communication – Seven Cardinal Rules of Risk Communication*

www.epa.gov/superfund/tools/pdfs/37riskcom.pdf

- ◆ **NJDEP report:** *Establishing Dialogue & Planning for Success: A Guide to Effective Communication Planning*

www.state.nj.us/dep/dsr/pub.htm



NJDEP Office of Community Relations

Website: www.nj.gov/dep/srp/community

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