



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

JON S. CORZINE
Governor

LISA P. JACKSON
Commissioner

September 18, 2007

Dear Parents and Guardians:

We are sending you this letter to correct inaccuracies in the September 14 story by The Record regarding the removal of pesticide-contaminated soil at the West Brook Middle School.

Contrary to the article, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has concluded its investigation of the soil contamination, issued a letter approving the final action taken by the Paramus Board of Education for its soil investigation and removal work, and taken enforcement action against the Board of Education for violating the Solid Waste Management Act.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) has been extremely responsive and proactive in addressing the pesticide contaminated soil issue since it came to our attention in May.

- On May 24, less than a day after learning about the existence of a soil pile potentially containing pesticides, an NJDEP inspector visited the site and noted a pile of dirt that was covered and surrounded by a chain link fence. The stockpiled soils were excavated from the foundation of the building during the installation of heating and air conditioning units for the classrooms. Pesticides were detected when the soil was tested for disposal purposes. The Board of Education agreed to remove the soil pile from the site.
- By May 31, the soil pile was removed by the NJDEP's Emergency Response program.
- On June 13, NJDEP officials attended a town hall meeting with parents and school officials to outline the work completed, address risk concerns, and discuss potential next steps.
- In early July, the Board of Education excavated additional soils from the former soil pile area and an alcove area. These soils were excavated in accordance with NJDEP regulations. Note that all remediation activities at the school were approved by the NJDEP prior to commencement. The NJDEP issued a No Further Action letter approving the final remedial actions and confirming compliance with NJDEP's residential cleanup criteria on August 14.

- Additionally, as a result of inspections conducted by NJDEP's Compliance and Enforcement program, a \$5,000 Notice of Civil Administrative Penalty Assessment (NOCAPA) was issued on July 13 to the Paramus Board of Education for improperly storing the soil without a solid waste facility permit between December 2006 and May 2007.

The only contaminants of concern at West Brook Middle School were the pesticides aldrin, dieldrin and chlordane; the highest levels of contamination were found in the soil pile. We must stress that NJDEP uses its most protective soil cleanup criteria -- the residential exposure scenario -- for school settings. This approach provides a very conservative level of protectiveness, assuming health risks based on exposure for 350 days per year over a 30-year time period.

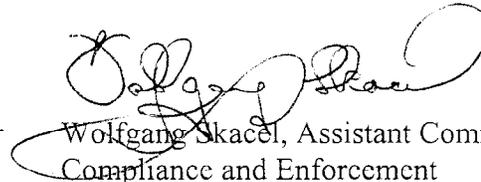
We must also stress that additional soil samples collected in open areas around the school and along the foundation did not contain any contaminants above residential soil cleanup criteria. All soil samples collected after the removal of stockpiled soil showed no contaminants above the NJDEP residential soil cleanup criteria.

We have worked closely with the Board of Education to provide you with accurate information. We hope this letter clarifies the inaccuracies in the recent news article and confirms that we have completed all actions necessary to protect the health and safety of your children.

Sincerely,



Irene S. Kropp, Assistant Commissioner
Site Remediation



Wolfgang Skacel, Assistant Commissioner
Compliance and Enforcement