

Environmental Report: May 16, 2016

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Quemetco:

Since the last HHIA meeting in April, I attended three meetings: 1) with representatives of Hilda Solis: (Apr. 21, 2016), the Clean Air Coalition of Avocado Heights (Apr. 22nd), and with DTSC at VFW in Hacienda Heights (Apr. 22nd). An article in about the Quemetco issue appeared in the San Gabriel Valley Tribune on April 23, 2016 after I was interviewed with Steve Scauzillo (<http://www.sgvtribune.com/environment-and-nature/20160428/hundreds-of-hacienda-heights-homes-near-industry-battery-plant-to-be-tested-for-lead-arsenic>).

At these meetings, past problems at the plant were reviewed including recurring violations of regulations in the past, and the present request for extension of permits for (10 years from DTSC and increase in processing by 25% to be issued by Southern California Air Quality Management District. The staff of AQMD have recommended the project not be expanded. However, opponents of the plant point out that the new head of AQMD was a past lobbyist for Quemetco. It was revealed the batteries are coming not only from the states west of the Rockies but also coming from foreign areas including among other Nigeria, Guam, France, Colombia.

Soil testing in past revealed extremely high soil levels detected in 1994. Additional measurements of high lead levels in 2004 resulted in Quemetco being required to clean-up soils around the perimeter of their plant. The hazardous waste was illegally taken to Puente Hills landfill (not a hazardous waste disposal site). After this was discovered, some material was taken to other sites and dumped along a local creek. Other areas were capped with asphalt. AQMD violations exceeding permitted thresholds have been periodically reported.

The application for expansion and extension of permits has resulted in a DTSC requirement for soil testing in the area around the plant. Areas of Hacienda Heights within ¼ mile of Quemetco will be tested. Soil sampling will begin in late May or June. If high lead levels are detected, clean up may be required.

A testing work-plan has been developed by DTSC. It will include:

- Sampling of homes, commercial and industrial sites, right of ways will begin with a ¼ mile radius. Testing will include all homes sampled in earlier studies in 1991 and 2004. Up to 50 samples will be taken for each residence—10 locations at 5 depths-0 1-3 inches, 3-6 inches, 6-12 inches, 12-18 inches.

- Testing will evaluate whether airborne deposition/accumulation has occurred in the 8 years since 2004 has recontaminated areas cleaned. These were the areas cleaned by Quemetco at that time.
- Investigations will determine from storm drain boxes near the facility if there has been accumulation of hazardous waste materials.
- Tests will determine lateral extent of airborne and surface water borne deposition. The highest level in past occurred beyond the ¼ mile near 605 freeway. Testing will occur along Puente Creek and San Jose Creek.
- Sampling will be by X ray fluorescence, considered to be accurate. Some samples will also be sent to certified labs. DTSC representatives will be present during the sampling.
- There is a 80 mg/kg threshold for lead (Pb).
- A baseline will be established with which to compare results around Quemetco with those in a similar setting but without a similar recycling plant.
- Quemetco will have to develop a method to fingerprint the lead to determine the source of the lead if that distinction is to be. Without fingerprinting, all lead will be considered to have originated from Quemetco.
- Questions have been raised by the Clean Air Coalition about potential legal issues in agreement with DTSC to come on property: does this agreement limit Quemetco's obligation to clean up if a problem?
- Sampling is to start this month in thoroughfares and other areas that not need agreements from residents to enter properties.
- Blood tests are also offered free by the County County Health Dept. and Quemetco.

Los Angeles County Park Assessment:

The Los Angeles County Parks Assessment program has been completed. A community meeting about the results will be held May 16, 2016 at the Hacienda Heights Community Center, 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

From the report:

“EXECUTIVE SUMMARY In March 2015, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved a motion to initiate the Countywide Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment. This represents an unprecedented effort to document existing parks and recreation facilities in cities and unincorporated communities and to use these data to

determine the scope, scale, and location of park need in Los Angeles County. The Parks Needs Assessment will help local officials, park agencies, and residents understand the future steps that need to be taken to ensure all communities have adequate access to thriving parks. Park projects in Los Angeles County are currently funded in part by Proposition A, the Safe Neighborhoods Park Tax that is set to expire in 2019. Once this tax sunsets, funding for park projects will be greatly reduced. The results of the Parks Needs Assessment will help inform planning and decision-making regarding future funding. In initiating the Parks Needs Assessment, the Board of Supervisors has affirmed the importance of parks as essential infrastructure in the County. Healthy, safe communities have thriving parks that contribute to public health and well-being, create a sense of place, increase community cohesion, improve the environment, and boost the economy.



To read about the program and the entire results of the assessment contact:

http://file.lacounty.gov/dpr/cms1_243261.pdf