



March 10, 2015

Mr. Abraham Weitzberg, Ph.D.
5711 Como Circle
Woodland Hills, California 91367

Dear Dr. Weitzberg:

Thank you for your June 25 and November 11, 2014, letters to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) describing the Community Advisory Group (CAG) concerns about the Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL), Ventura County, California. Your letters indicate that the SSFL CAG is requesting that ATSDR:

- Revisit its conclusions and restate them appropriately based on ATSDR assessment of the current levels of contamination, and their pathways to human receptors.
- Evaluate the risks, including Valley Fever, to surrounding populations and those on truck routes and at the disposal sites from postulated numbers of trucks for one of the proposed cleanup scenarios.
- Suggest and discuss cleanup alternatives for consideration that may be protective of health while minimizing negative effects of the remediation.
- Evaluate the information and conclusions presented in prior epidemiological and pathway studies and present an ATSDR evaluation of those documents to the community in a readily understandable fashion.
- Provide the communities around SSFL with a perspective of the real SSFL risk in relation to other sites around the country.

This letter is to inform you that ATSDR has accepted your petition and how we are initially planning to address the CAG's concerns about SSFL.

Under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA, also known as Superfund), Congress provided ATSDR with the authority to conduct certain public health actions following a request from a community member. All requests are evaluated for relevance to ATSDR's mission, whether data are available for analysis, and public health priority. Actions taken on accepted petitions are designed to determine whether people have been, or are currently being, exposed to hazardous substances (primarily chemicals) released into the environment from a hazardous waste site or facility. ATSDR then evaluates whether the exposure is harmful, or potentially harmful, and whether the exposure should be stopped or reduced. These evaluations are based on the available environmental sampling data typically collected by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or the local regulatory agencies.

While ATSDR's evaluations can assess whether or not an exposure increases the risk of disease or a medical condition, they are not able to determine the cause of a particular disease or medical condition experienced by an individual or a group of individuals in a community. Please note that ATSDR does not prioritize risk management/remediation options or review/evaluate environmental regulatory operational procedures of other organizations or agencies.

To assist the SSFL community in understanding the current SSFL-related public health concerns, ATSDR is planning to:

- Determine whether currently there are any completed pathways of human exposure to SSFL-related contaminants and what public health concerns may be associated with those exposures.
- Evaluate whether the proposed remedial options would be protective of human health.
- Provide the SSFL community with public friendly information and presentations of ATSDR's findings and the strengths and weaknesses of SSFL-related epidemiological studies.

Please be advised that ATSDR does not have the technical expertise to evaluate the potential Valley Fever health concerns associated with hauling large amounts of SSFL soil through local neighborhoods. So we will not be able to assist the SSFL community understand the risks associated with Valley Fever in the area.

In the near future, ATSDR will engage with the community near SSFL. This will include small group discussions and health education activities. We will coordinate our efforts with the SSFL CAG, other community groups, California Department of Public Health, California Department of Toxic Substances Control, the US Department of Energy, and the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Based upon the input received from these various stakeholders and our public health evaluation of the environmental investigations and data, ATSDR will provide its public health evaluations for public comment.

Thank you for forwarding your concerns to ATSDR. If you have any questions on ATSDR's future involvement at this site, please contact CAPT Robert Knowles, ATSDR Regional Director for Region 9. CAPT Knowles may be reached at (415) 947-4317 or via email at Knowles.Robert@epa.gov. If you have any questions on how your request was reviewed, please contact Dr. Sven Rodenbeck, ATSDR Petition Coordinator, at (770) 488-3660 or via email at SRodenbeck@cdc.gov.

Sincerely,



James Stephens, PhD

Acting Director

Division of Community Health Investigations

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry