

Former Burn Area

also known as the Velsicol Burn Pit Superfund Site

The Former Burn Area (FBA), also known as the Velsicol Burn Pit Superfund Site, is located in an out-of-bounds area on the Hidden Oaks Golf Course in St. Louis, Gratiot County, MI. It is the former waste burning site for the Velsicol Chemical Plant, formerly the Michigan Chemical Corporation. From 1956 to 1970, a number of chemicals were burned at the FBA weekly.

Records are not available on all the chemicals thrown away or burned at this site. Because of this, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) sampled the soil, ash piles, groundwater and sediment for 150 chemicals as part of the Remedial Investigation. In 2010, the FBA was placed on the National Priorities List and became a Superfund Site.

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) conducted a public health assessment to determine people's contact with soil, ash, and water at or near the site. Additionally, samples from a few drinking water wells in the area were evaluated.



SOIL

Soil samples were taken from the FBA in 2004 and again in 2007. Levels of chemicals present in the soil are, for almost all samples, below the health-protective screening levels for direct contact. Visitors, including golfers, to the golf course around the FBA are expected to have little to no contact with the FBA soil as it is not on the golf course. Workers at the golf course are also **not** expected to have contact with the soil of the FBA.

Soil samples were taken from a residential neighborhood to the east of the FBA in 2007. The chemical levels found in the residential area were below screening levels. Thus, levels in the soil taken from the residential area downwind of the FBA are **not** expected to harm the health of residents.

ASH PILE

Two ash piles were found in a wooded area not on golf course property, but could be considered in the rough or out-of-bounds area for the golf course. These ash piles were sampled in 2005. Only one sample was taken from the surface of each ash pile. Levels of arsenic and lead were found to be higher than screening levels. There is not enough information available to determine if the chemicals present in the ash piles at the FBA could harm the health of workers or visitor.



Workers and visitors to the golf course are **not** expected to have contact with the ash piles, since they are not on golf course property. If you think you came in contact with the ash piles, you should wash off ash and soil from yourself and your golf equipment.

WATER

Groundwater samples were taken in 2004. Monitoring wells were installed in the FBA and sampled again in 2005, 2007 and 2008. Current levels in the groundwater at the site are **not** expected to harm the health of visitors or workers because people have little to no contact with groundwater at the FBA. Chemicals may migrate into the groundwater and could, in the future, reach residential private wells or municipal drinking water if the migration continues.

A residential well and one well on the Hidden Oaks Golf Course were tested for chemicals in 2002. Levels in the drinking water wells are **not** expected to harm people's health.

Five surface water and seven sediment samples were taken in 2008 from the drainage ditch south of the FBA. The chemicals in the surface water samples were below the screening levels. People's health is **not** expected to be harmed by surface water or sediment in the drainage ditch, a county drain near the site. People have limited, if any, contact with water and sediment in the ditch.



CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information regarding the FBA or the public health assessment, contact MDCH by calling **1-800-648-6942** or visit the website www.michigan.gov/mdch-toxics and look under the "Health Assessments and Related Documents" tab.

Michigan Department
of Community Health

