

Hunters Point Naval Shipyard Parcel A-2 Survey

October 15, 2018

BACKGROUND

Hunters Point Naval Shipyard (Hunters Point) was in use from 1939 to 1974 by the Navy. Activities resulted in hazardous materials being deposited, including some radioactive contaminants. A federal program to oversee the cleanup and transfer of military installations to civilian use was initiated at Hunters Point in 1988. In 1989, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) placed Hunters Point on the Superfund National Priorities List. The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has served as the lead state agency reviewing Superfund cleanup activities and receives funding from the Navy for this work. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has been involved, through a contract with DTSC, in the review and oversight of the remedial activities for radiological contaminants at Hunters Point. The site is comprised of multiple parcels and the clean-up plan depended on the uses that had occurred on each parcel. Parcel A had been primarily used for residential purposes as well as some offices and storage.

Parcel A was removed from the Superfund list in 1999. Although it had been determined that there was no potential for radiological contamination, U.S. EPA, conducted a radiological survey of Parcel A in 2002. Scanning results did not find radiation levels above those attributable to naturally occurring sources. In 2004, the Navy conducted a comprehensive review of the historical uses of radiological operations at Hunters Point. The comprehensive review confirmed that Parcel A had not been used for purposes that might pose a risk to human health or the environment. Based on these results, the parcel was determined to be non-impacted and was approved for transfer. Parcel A, which is comprised of two non-contiguous portions (A-1 and A-2), was officially transferred to the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency in December 2004, and has since had residential development (townhomes and condominiums) on Parcel A-1. Home construction began in 2012 and the first homeowners moved into the SF Shipyard development in 2014.

Beginning in 2012, the Navy identified problems with data from Hunters Point areas (but not on Parcel A) and former employees of a contractor who had conducted testing and remediation work on other parcels made allegations of falsification of test data by the contractor. Two former contractor employees were convicted over fraudulent data collection activities. Parcel A was not implicated in these allegations or potential fraudulent data activities. In 2018, however, former workers made new allegations of potential falsification of data on, or adjacent to, Parcel A. Out of a desire to address any potential questions, U.S. EPA, the Navy and the City of San Francisco requested CDPH to perform a radiological gamma scanning survey of Parcel A (divided into Parcel A-1 and A-2).

The field scanning work for the survey of Parcel A-1 is planned to be complete by mid-October. Upon its completion, CDPH will begin the scanning of Parcel A-2. Parcel A-2 is an uninhabited area of approximately 20 acres of open and flat graded areas surrounded by steep and hilly ridges (see figure below). The site consists of original native soil with additional soil imported from Parcel A-1's construction project that began about 10 years ago.

SURVEY GOALS AND SCOPE

This CDPH survey will scan for any extraneous ionizing radiation that could affect human health and safety and is not intended to characterize, confirm, or validate any previous surveys or clean-up

criteria. Because of the mix of soils noted above along with the lack of structures, hardscape and new soils/landscaping, the Parcel A-2 scan will also provide data of added value for the evaluation of Parcel A as a whole. Using the same equipment as used for the Parcel A-1 survey, a towed array large volume detector (RS-700) gamma mapping system will be used to survey relatively flat surfaces and hand-held sodium iodide scintillation detectors will be used for areas inaccessible to the RS-700 (i.e. uneven or steeper terrain). Periodic static measurements will also be taken as an added check. In the event that a radiation measurement significantly higher than background levels for this area is found, the location will be documented and investigated further by conducting additional static measurements to identify the radionuclide causing the anomaly. Confirmed elevated levels that are determined to be from a man-made substance will result in notification of the involved agencies and coordination regarding a response action. Gamma radiation scans are the best way to determine if there is any potential for direct exposure to humans beyond normal background levels universally present in dirt everywhere.

RESPONSIBILITIES

CDPH has responsibility for conducting the radiological gamma scan survey as described, and will be lead on communicating with the public about the work plan.

The Navy will provide funding for this project. Once CDPH's scan is complete, CDPH will present the results, including any elevated radiological readings, to the Navy, U.S. EPA, and DTSC as well as to the public.

San Francisco is the lead agency for the Parcel A property and is responsible for communications with residents there.

TIMELINE

Public Release of the Work Plan: October 15, 2018

CDPH Field Work Begins: October 22, 2018

Final Data Analysis and Reporting: February 2019



Figure: Aerial View of Parcel A-2. Red line depicts border of A-2.