

# Edgewater cleanup stops after more bad soil found

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[EDGEWATER](#) — Remediation work on Veterans Field has been halted amid the recent detection of more contaminated soil, prompting speculation that the latest contaminants were accidentally brought in by the company hired to clean up the site.

MARKO GEORGIEV/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Officials fear that a company hired to clean the Veterans Field construction site accidentally brought in tainted soil.

Borough officials were notified late last week, and work has stopped while soil samples are tested and, if necessary, a corrective plan is put in place, Borough Administrator Greg Franz said.

"Hopefully by this week, we'll know what we have and we'll take the necessary steps to remove that soil and replace it with good soil," Franz said.

It is unclear how widespread the contamination may be, he said.

TERMS Environmental Services Inc., a consulting firm the borough hired to monitor the site, stated in an Oct. 3 letter to officials that the contractor, Waterside Construction LLC, trucked in crushed concrete and that it was unclear where the material came from.

"The material that was imported to the site was not tested prior to being brought to the site as we have continually notified the contractor was a requirement," the letter stated. "In addition, we had previously notified the contractor that crushed concrete proposed for reuse/recycling had specific testing requirement."

TERMS said it then collected soil samples and asked Waterside not to spread the concrete until lab results came back, but the contractor spread or mixed the material with clean fill.

TERMS officials could not be reached for comment.

Alan Marcus, a spokesman for developer Fred Daibes, who owns Waterside, disputed the claims made by TERMS and said that any concrete Waterside imported was done so under the direction and supervision of TERMS.

He added that Waterside had gotten the crushed stone from the old Alcoa site, an aluminum plant along River Road that closed in 1967. Traces of polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs – chemicals formerly used as fire retardants but now linked to cancer – led to a cleanup in the 1990s. But the state Department of Environmental Protection had approved reusing materials from the site, and Waterside obtained the concrete to cap the land at Veterans Field, Marcus said.

"We have every right to presume the material's clean," Marcus said. "However, to the extent that DEP should be wrong, we have said we'll remove that material" at the company's expense.

DEP spokesman Larry Hajna wrote in an email that the department could not vouch for whether the concrete Waterside used came from Alcoa. However, at the time the plant was demolished, materials were crushed on site, tested and approved for use in the widening of River Road, he said.

The Alcoa site was purchased by Daibes, who sold it to Avalon Bay Communities Inc. in 1999.

TERMS has not definitively concluded that the latest contaminants at Veterans Field came from the crushed concrete that Waterside imported, though it is looking into the possibility, Franz said.

Meanwhile, Marcus said it's also possible that the contaminants were there all along — before Waterside brought in new material or when they washed ashore from the Hudson River after Superstorm Sandy.

According to TERMS, the latest soil samples contained "extremely elevated" levels of PCBs and other compounds, and further testing showed the material had spread over a much larger area than the contractor initially indicated.

Veterans Field closed in 2011 after officials discovered that polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, or PAHs, in the park's historic fill were two to seven times greater than government standards in most cases and that PCBs were slightly above acceptable levels.

- See more at:

[http://www.northjersey.com/news/227339761\\_Edgewater\\_cleanup\\_stops\\_after\\_more\\_bad\\_soil\\_f  
ound.html?page=all#sthash.nstNdE2T.dpuf](http://www.northjersey.com/news/227339761_Edgewater_cleanup_stops_after_more_bad_soil_found.html?page=all#sthash.nstNdE2T.dpuf)