

EPA, State Health Officials Agree

Health Danger Reports Untrue at Quantas Site

Widespread reports that fumes that escaped last year during remediation work at the Quantas Superfund site just south of City Place were dangerously harmful are not true, according to statements released by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Quoting from a New Jersey Department of Health report, the federal agency states that there is no indication that the vapors are more dangerous than previously thought. The New Jersey Department of Health report confirms EPA's conclusions. The report says: "Long-term health effects are not expected from the measured naphthalene concentrations.

"After (EPA) made changes to the remediation (work practices) at the site, short-term concentrations of naphthalene were greatly reduced."

EPA agrees with the report's conclusions that people can experience certain short-term health effects; such as watery eyes, headaches, and nausea. EPA is aware that some people have reported these types of temporary impacts.

The report focuses, in particular, on data that had been collected at the fence line of the Superfund site

(where the most elevated readings occurred prior to March 2018), assuming, conservatively, that an individual remained at the fence line for extended periods of time (e.g., longer than an hour). As the report states, "the health effects are temporary and stop when the exposure stops. In addition to taking a number of measures to reduce volatile emissions and odors during the cleanup work, after March of last year, the air testing network greatly expanded the number of air monitors placed in the neighboring public spaces, resulting in a more representative measurement of potential exposures to site neighbors."

EPA's assessment focuses on potential long-term health impacts (i.e., permanent impacts, cancer and non-cancer illnesses) that could result from even low level exposures. EPA fully understand people's concerns and has made meaningful changes to the cleanup practices for the site to respond to the short-term symptoms of exposure discussed in the report.

More importantly, as noted in the report, EPA has