

JPL Asks For Community Input Regarding Groundwater Contamination

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In an effort to better inform the community, Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), situated in the upper Devil's Gate Dam area, is preparing a community relations plan for Federal Superfund activities on the laboratory regarding local ground water contamination and its effect on the drinking water supply.

Community interviews are being held by JPL and they are seeking individual input with regard to best avenues of receiving information about JPL's ongoing process of locating and containing contamination sources. Contact Kimberly A. Lievens at (818) 354-0112 for more information on the cleanup effort or for an appointment.

JPL recently provided background information regarding the water contamination in their "Fact Sheet No. 1, April 1991" entitled "Environmental Cleanup Re-

view." The following information is taken from that "fact sheet" and from direct interview.

In 1980, the City of Pasadena discovered that municipal wells within 2000 feet, and to the southeast of JPL were contaminated with traces of solvents. Eventually, four wells were shut down by the city because of contamination levels; three of these are in the Arroyo Seco above Devil's Gate Reservoir.

JPL and the City of Pasadena conducted preliminary investigations in 1982, '84, '86, and '87 to begin to assess hydrologic conditions in the Arroyo Seco and explore treatment alternatives.

In response to SARA, JPL conducted a preliminary assessment and site inspection in early 1988. SARA, also known as "Superfund" is the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act, enacted in 1986 requiring federal facilities to conduct investigations of past waste-management activities.

In February 1990, JPL funded the construction of a temporary water treatment plant for the city of Pasadena. Construction of this facility was completed in September 1990. According to Suzy Nielson, toxics specialist at the Pasadena Water & Power "the water now is 60 percent better than standard."

In 1990 installation of five monitoring wells around JPL resulted in groundwater sampling results indicating the presence of TCE, PCE, CTC, and 1, 1 dichloroethene (all volatile organic compounds) above California drinking water standards.

Information gathered from the expanded site inspection (ESI) will be used by the Environmental Protection Agen-

cy (EPA) to score the JPL site on the Hazard Ranking System, a tool used to establish remedial response priorities and to place the most contaminated sites on the National Priorities List (NPL). Approximately 1200 sites across the country are currently on the EPA's NPL. JPL expects to be the first NASA installation to be "listed" on the NPL according to Pam Cooley Blandino, a JPL spokesperson and environmental engineer.

The JPL "fact sheet" indicated that it will continue the Superfund process with a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS) and the installation of additional monitoring wells and soil borings in suspected source areas. The field work was scheduled to begin in the spring of 1991. To date the (RI/FS) is waiting for EPA's listing assessments according to Blandino.

Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) is located at 4800 Oak Grove Drive in La Canada Flintridge. It is administered by the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) in Pasadena for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

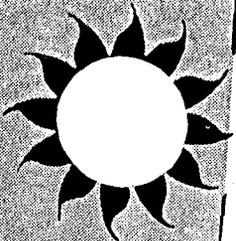
JPL is currently involved in the exploration of Earth and the solar system with automated unmanned spacecraft, and the design and operation of the global Deep Space Network that tracks the spacecraft.

JPL has a work force of approximately 8000 people in the Los Angeles area; roughly 6000 are employees and 2000 are contractors. Over half live within 10 miles of the facility.



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