



# ASCON SITE PROJECT UPDATE

Fact Sheet #6

September 2000

## INTRODUCTION

The Ascon Landfill Site is a vacant 38-acre parcel at the southwest corner of Hamilton Avenue and Magnolia Street in Huntington Beach (Figures 1 and 2). As part of an ongoing study to determine the best cleanup alternative, two onsite pilot-scale tests were conducted in 1999 to confirm that onsite treatment of the primary wastes at Ascon was feasible. The results of those pilot studies are now available and being incorporated into an updated Feasibility Study for the site. This fact sheet includes information on the completed pilot studies, next steps at the site, the site history and how the public can participate in Ascon's cleanup.



Figure 1

Coast Air Quality Management District. Air sample analytical results verified compliance with all permit requirements.

The stabilization treatment process uses cement agents to immobilize the chemicals in the waste and to add strength to the material for re-use as road base or fill. These cement agents are mixed with the waste under controlled moisture conditions and cure times to render the waste safe from further leaching of contaminants and to increase strength. The object of the test was to identify the best recipe (or mix) for binding the chemicals in Ascon's waste material.

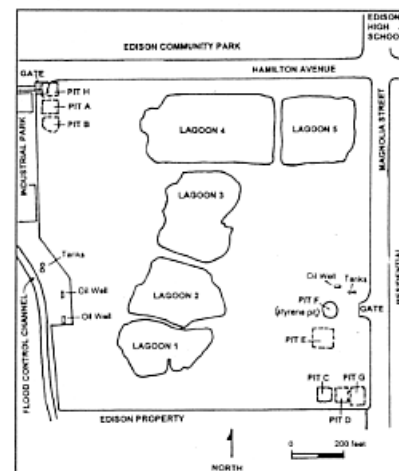


Figure 2

## BACKGROUND

The California Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), has signed a Voluntary Cleanup Agreement (VCA) with California/Nevada Developments, LLC (CND), formerly Savannah Resources Corporation. Under this VCA, the DTSC is overseeing CND's efforts to develop a plan for the cleanup of the Ascon Site. A new VCA or Consent Order will be required for the actual cleanup activities in the future. Further detail regarding the VCA was outlined in Fact Sheet #4 dated March 1999. This document is available at the public repositories (for locations see fact sheet article "Information Repository").

## PROJECT UPDATE

**Pilot Test #1:** The first pilot-scale test was conducted in March 1999 to monitor air emissions during trial excavations of drilling mud waste and to evaluate the solvent extraction treatment process on liquid wastes at the site. The second pilot-scale test was conducted over a four-day period in October 1999. This test monitored air emissions during additional trial excavations of drilling mud and tested the effectiveness of the stabilization treatment process on the drilling muds and petroleum-impacted soil at Ascon. Both tests were conducted onsite under the supervision of the DTSC, the city Fire Department, South Coast Air Quality Management District and other agencies.

The first pilot test focused on the treatment of the liquid petroleum hydrocarbon wastes. Additional information on the procedures and test results can be found in Fact Sheet #5 dated October 1999. In summary, a thorough air monitoring system showed that during the pilot test, liquid wastes and other site wastes could be excavated with air emissions well below levels protective of human health. The solvent extraction treatment process was also demonstrated to be a feasible treatment method for the liquid wastes tested.

**Pilot Test #2:** The second onsite pilot-scale test, conducted in October 1999, also addressed air emissions from waste excavation operations, as well as the treatment of primary solid wastes (drilling muds and petroleum-impacted soil) at Ascon. The treatment test evaluated the effectiveness of the cement stabilization process on wastes from various locations around the site.

Air emissions were monitored, sampled and analyzed both in the excavation and treatment areas, and at the property boundaries during both tests. As with the first pilot test results reported in Fact Sheet #5, air emissions during the second test were well below levels protective of human health. In addition to health levels, overall emissions were regulated under a temporary permit from the South

Coast Air Quality Management District. Air sample analytical results verified compliance with all permit requirements. Five different cement recipes and waste mixtures were tested over the four-day period on different waste sources on the site. Test batch volumes varied between 100 and 200 cubic yards to simulate full-scale field conditions. Samples of waste before and after treatment were collected and tested for chemical and physical characteristics. Results showed that all five of the tests batches passed the goals set for chemical and physical stability.

Overall, both pilot-scale tests were a success since they indicate that Ascon's wastes could be safely excavated and treated as part of remedial alternatives considered for the site. The results of these tests are included in the Ascon Feasibility Study, which is currently under DTSC review.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The Feasibility Study has been rewritten to incorporate the pilot-scale results and recommend revised remedial alternatives for the site based on these results. The revised Feasibility Study document was recently submitted to DTSC for review, comment and approval. While the Feasibility Study is in the review cycle with DTSC, the draft Remedial Action Plan (RAP) and environmental impact assessment will be prepared. By Summer 2001, these documents are scheduled to be completed and announcements will be made regarding the public review period.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

The draft RAP is an important public document that educates the community about the preferred cleanup technology and provides them with an opportunity to participate in the cleanup decision. The draft RAP includes a: summary of the site investigation (Remedial Investigation), discussion of cleanup technologies evaluated (Feasibility Study), Health Risk Assessment, identifies the preferred cleanup method and states how the community can participate in the cleanup decision. This information will be summarized in a fact sheet, which will be mailed to everyone on the project mailing list.

The draft RAP will be circulated for a 30 day public review and comment following DTSC's approval of the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) documents. A community meeting will also be held during the comment period. After the close of the public comment period, DTSC will evaluate the comments received. Based upon comments received, the documents may be modified. Written responses will be created for each written comment received. These responses and comments will form the Responsiveness Summary. This document will be sent to everyone who submitted comments.

**OVERVIEW OF SITE HISTORY**

The Ascon site operated as an active dump from approximately 1938 through 1984. In the early years of operation, much of the waste came from oil drilling operations. This includes drilling muds, wastewater brines and other drilling wastes. Records indicate that from 1957 to 1971, chromic acid, sulfuric acid, aluminum slag, fuel oils, styrene (a form of plastic) and other wastes were received by site operators and deposited onsite. From 1971 to 1984, material deposited onsite included inert solid wastes such as asphalt, concrete, metal, soil and wood.

Ascon Properties, Inc. purchased the site in 1984. The company was unsuccessful in attempts to utilize the property and went bankrupt in 1989. NESI Investment Group obtained ownership through a foreclosure sale. NESI prepared to remove some of the oily liquids from the onsite lagoons in December 1991. They were ordered to halt removal work in March 1992 after being informed by the South Coast Air Quality Management District about the need for proper air quality permits. The air permits were issued in August 1992, but NESI did not re-start the liquid removal plan. NESI filed for bankruptcy in January 1993.

In May 1993, the property was transferred to Signal Mortgage Company of Long Beach by way of foreclosure proceedings against NESI. In November 1995, Signal Mortgage Company entered into an agreement with CND to work with the DTSC on the RI/FS and RAP for the Ascon site. CND signed a voluntary cleanup agreement in May 1996 for DTSC supervision, review and approval of the RI/FS, RAP and associated documents for the site.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY**

DTSC has a Public Participation policy to ensure effective two-way communication between the public and the DTSC throughout the course of each project. Past public participation activities on the Ascon site have included fact sheets and other mailings, as well as meetings with the public and the citizens' Ad Hoc Committee (the Committee was formed in the mid-1980s). These public out-reach activities, and others that may be suggested by the public, will be continued as site work progresses.

Two public information repositories are established in the area. They hold various documents associated to this site. We encourage the public to review these. Additionally, we welcome your questions and concerns at any time.

**INFORMATION REPOSITORIES  
Huntington Beach Public Libraries**

Central Park Main Library  
Cultural and Information Center  
7111 Talbert Avenue  
Huntington Beach, CA  
(714) 842-4481

Banning Annex  
9281 Banning Avenue  
Huntington Beach, CA  
(714) 375-5005

**PROJECT CONTACTS  
California/Nevada Developments, LLC**

- Marina Robertson, Project Manager  
(562) 430-4354 ext. 108

**Department of Toxic Substances Control**

- Derrick Alatorre, Public Participation Specialist  
(714) 484-5474
- Oussama Issa, Project Manager  
(714) 484-5479

**ASCON – Mailing Coupon**

If you are not currently on the Ascon mailing list and wish to be added, please fill out the attached coupon and mail to:

Mr. Derrick Alatorre  
DTSC  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, California 90630

- Please place me on the mailing list to receive all future material and notifications.
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**ATTENTION:**  
Update on Cleanup and Planning  
for Former Ascon Landfill Site

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