

# Ascon Huntington Beach Pit F

April 2021

A safer, cleaner future for the community

**Nothing is more important than the health and safety of the Huntington Beach community as we work together to finish the cleanup of the Ascon Landfill Site.** The remediation of the Ascon Site includes the excavation and off-haul of waste materials from what is known as Pit F.

## What is Pit F?

While Ascon operated as an active landfill and received oil field wastes from 1938 through 1972, wastes generated from the production of styrene were deposited on the Ascon Site in an area now referred to as Pit F. The location of Pit F, which is 45 feet wide by 45 feet long by 30 feet deep, is easily recognizable on the Ascon Site as it is covered by a large white tent near the southeast corner of the Ascon Site.



Pit F Tent on Ascon Site

## What are the Waste Materials in Pit F?

Though Pit F materials contain wastes generated from the production of styrene, styrene is only present at a maximum of 90 parts per million (ppm) in the pit which is well below the conservative health-protective screening level of 5,600 ppm for someone directly exposed over a lifetime. In addition to low concentrations of [styrene](#), previous sampling efforts have found [naphthalene](#), [ethylbenzene](#), [benzene](#), [phenanthrene](#), and more odorous compounds such as [carbon disulfide](#), [hydrogen sulfide](#) and [methyl mercaptan](#). The buried Pit F waste materials are odorous, thick, and viscous, and many are taffy-like in consistency. Pit F waste materials will be removed underneath the protective tent with an air treatment system. You can find out more about these constituents in Pit F on the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website: <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov>.

## What is Styrene?

Styrene is a chemical used to make latex, synthetic rubber and polystyrene resins. These resins are used to make plastic packaging, disposable cups and containers, insulation and other products.



## Pit F Excavation and Transportation Offsite

Under the direction of the Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC), the Ascon team is preparing to excavate and transport Pit F materials to a permitted landfill. The work crews and equipment necessary to complete the excavation of the materials in Pit F began arriving onsite in March, and excavation work is expected to begin in June. All work is being overseen by DTSC. The tent and excavation are also under separate permits from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD).

The safety of the community and our workers is our first priority during this work. To ensure safety, the Pit F excavation work will be conducted by hazardous waste trained work crews using equipment specifically designed for the safe excavation and transportation of these materials.

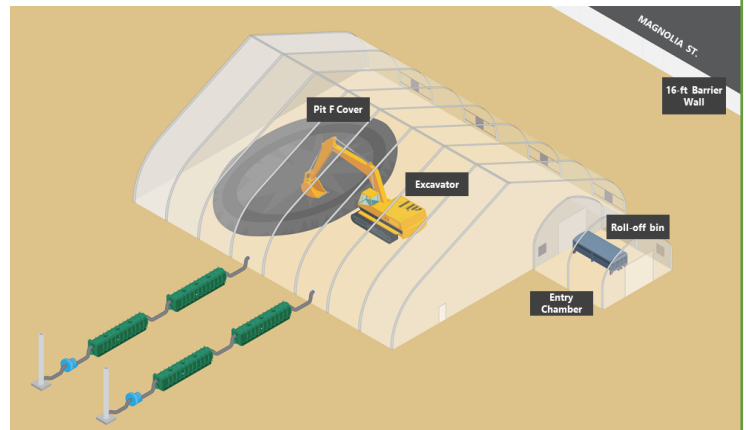
## PIT F TENT

The Pit F tent will be equipped with an air treatment system with blowers that maintain a vacuum in the tent that will capture potential odors and volatile organic compound emissions.

Contaminant emissions from excavation inside the tent will be collected and treated with vapor-phase granular activated carbon, through chemical adsorption. With chemical adsorption, the activated charcoal pores in the carbon trap and hold the contaminants.

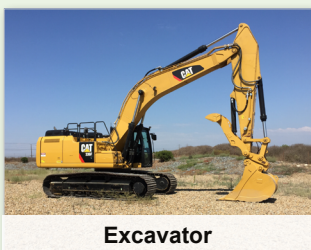
As an added measure of safety, the tent is equipped with an entry chamber that enables delivery and removal of waste bins without exposing the tent atmosphere to the outside. The two cargo doors through which the waste bins will pass are located at either side of the entry chamber and will never be open at the same time. With the use of a negative pressure atmosphere inside the tent and using the entry chamber cargo transfer, emissions inside the tent will be entirely directed to the air treatment system.

Pit F will be enclosed by the tent with air treatment during the entirety of the Pit F excavation work, including during off-hours.



## What You May See During Pit F Work

Due to the enclosed nature of work within the tent, Pit F excavation workers will wear personal protective equipment that includes respirators. In addition to the enclosed environment and waste material, there are also equipment emissions. Working with respirators inside the tent does not mean that nearby workers or community members are at risk. Ongoing air monitoring will ensure the safety of workers and the community.



Excavator



Waste Haul Trucks



Bins Loaded on Waste Haul Trucks

Excavators and waste haul trucks will be used during the Pit F excavation.

Pit F excavated material will be transported by haul trucks offsite in bins that will be completely sealed before leaving the tent.



## What You May Hear

All work will be conducted in compliance with Huntington Beach's residential noise ordinance. While we will endeavor to mitigate noise impacts to our neighbors, you may hear noise as a result of heavy equipment and trucks. Also, once excavation begins, the air treatment system for the Pit F tent will be running 24/7.



### How Will I Know My Air Quality Will Not Be Impacted?

In addition to existing stationary air monitoring stations both onsite and offsite, near real-time air monitoring telemetry around the Pit F work zone will ensure the safety of the community. Air data from the telemetry network will be posted on [asconhb.com](http://asconhb.com) approximately every two hours during active work hours.

Air monitoring has been included in all remedial work at Ascon and has documented air quality indicators are safely below health-protective screening levels. Additional offsite community air monitoring established in 2019 during work suspension and during active field work also has confirmed air quality indicators are safely below health-protective screening levels.



Inside of Pit F Tent, 2019



### Frequently asked questions

**How would emergencies be handled during Pit F excavation work?** Ascon closely coordinates with the Huntington Beach Fire Department and local first responder teams, and all are aware that Pit F excavation work will begin this year. In the case of an emergency, community members will be notified by the AsconAlert community opt-in emergency notification system, as well as by the proper local agencies. You can learn more about the community opt-in alert system at [Asconhb.com](http://Asconhb.com).

**How will the air emissions be captured within the Pit F tent?** Air emissions are captured within the Pit F tent by a vapor-phase granular activated carbon system which removes contaminants through chemical adsorption. The activated charcoal pores trap the contaminants and prevent their release into the atmosphere. The used activated carbon will be shipped offsite when it is spent or at the end of the work.

**What if power goes out during the work?** Onsite generators will be in place in the event of any power disruption, to assure continued operation of the air treatment system. Geomembrane covers and soil may also be used to cover the pit, if needed.

**How will the safety of the Pit F workers be managed?** All work conducted at Ascon follows the strictest state and federal worker safety guidelines, including COVID-19 regulations. Pit F workers have specialized training and personal protective gear to safely conduct the excavation work. All workers entering the tent when equipment is operating will be in appropriate personal protective equipment.

### Want more information? Questions? Concerns?

To learn more about the Ascon cleanup, and to sign up for our weekly project update email newsletter, visit our website at [Asconhb.com](http://Asconhb.com) or call the Ascon Community Information Line at (714) 388-1825.