



California Department of Health Services
Toxic Substances Control Program

Ascon Landfill (NESI Site)
Hazardous Waste Investigation

July 1991

Fact Sheet #1

Introduction

In January, 1991 the California Department of Health Services (DHS) signed an enforceable agreement with NESI Investment Group (NESI), current property owner of the Ascon Landfill Site, providing DHS oversight of all hazardous waste investigations and cleanup operations for the site. The site is located in Huntington Beach, California, in a residential land use area.

The purpose of this fact sheet is to provide an overview of past activities conducted on site and to provide residents, public officials and other interested parties information on the progress of upcoming remedial investigation and cleanup activities.

Site History

The Ascon Landfill is a vacant, 38-acre parcel of land located at the southwest corner of Hamilton Avenue and Magnolia Street in the City of Huntington Beach. (See Figure 1)

For decades, the site was known as the rotary mud dump and was primarily used for the disposal of oil field wastes. The dump operated under various owners from approximately 1938 until 1984. The facility consisted of percolation and evaporation surface impoundments into which drilling muds and waste water brines were commonly disposed. These impoundments were constructed with earthen berms elevated approximately 25 feet above natural grade. Records indicate that from 1957 to 1971, materials currently classified as hazardous wastes such as chromic acid, sulfuric acid, aluminum slag, fuel oils, mercaptans and styrene were also disposed of on site.

From 1971 to 1984 only inert, solid wastes were disposed of at the site. These include materials such as soil, concrete, asphalt, wood, metal and abandoned vehicles. It was as a home for asphalt and concrete wastes that the name Ascon Landfill was derived.

The property was owned and operated by the Garrish Brothers from 1938 to 1950. The Steverson Bros., Inc. then purchased and operated the landfill until 1984, when it was purchased by Ascon Properties, Inc. Ascon Properties, Inc. was unsuccessful in its attempts to utilize the property and filed bankruptcy in

1989. NESI Investment Group obtained ownership through a foreclosure sale and is currently attempting to remediate and develop the property.

Site Characterization

Site Characterization activities have been conducted by a number of agencies, including DHS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board, Orange County Environmental Health and the City of Huntington Beach.

A significant amount of data has been generated from past site characterization activities. However, much of the information cannot be reliably used due to incompleteness and absence of quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) documentation. Although the data cannot be fully relied upon, it is a valuable and useful guide to historical conditions and changes that may

COMMUNITY MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

July 30, 1991

ASCON COMMUNITY MEETING

Huntington Beach City Hall - Rm B-7
2000 Main Street, Huntington Beach, 92648
7:30 p.m.

DHS invites you to attend
this meeting to learn more about the
ASCON Landfill site investigation
and share your questions and
concerns with the Department.

For more information, please
contact Kristin Stultz at
(213) 590-4991

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have occurred. The data generated has given DHS, as well as other regulatory agencies involved, sufficient information to assess the degree of contamination.

Styrene Pit

A total of eight waste pits have been identified through aerial photographs and historical records. Records indicate that all pits may contain chromic and sulfuric acids, aluminum slag, magnesium and potassium chloride, mercaptans and styrene. All pits, with the exception of Pit F, have been filled in. Pit F, known as the styrene Pit, is presently covered to reduce vapor emissions. Pit F was reportedly a disposal ground for styrene tars and synthetic rubber wastes. Hot aluminum slag was also reported to have been dumped into this pit. Characterization results have not demonstrated the presence of abnormal pH readings, but metals have been detected at low levels. These results suggest that acid wastes were not disposed of at this pit. The primary concern associated with Pit F has been the public nuisance from odor created. The liquid contents of Pit F are slated for removal in September (See Insert for details)

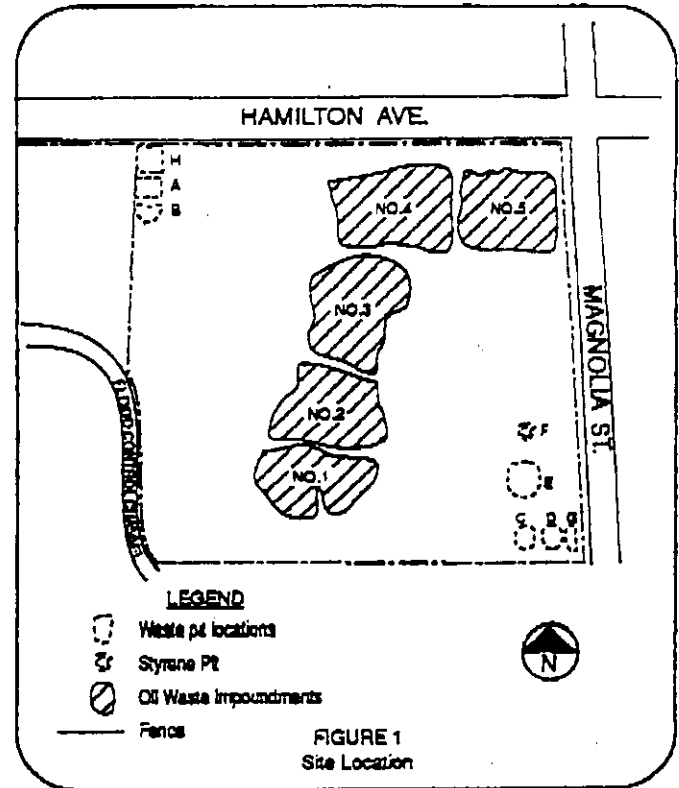
Oil Waste-Impoundments

Five oil waste impoundments are present on site. The waste materials in the surface impoundments are mainly oil related wastes. Oily wastes and their derivatives are not normally considered hazardous in their purest state. However, when combined with other constituents which themselves are hazardous, they also become hazardous. The material in the surface impoundments is in liquid form and is comprised of a black tar-like, oily mixture. Analytical results have indicated high levels of total petroleum hydrocarbons and low levels of metals. Toluene, benzene and xylenes are also present in the waste. The liquids in these impoundments will be removed in September. (See insert for details)

Evidence also indicates that the surface impoundments pose a threat to the local and migratory wildlife. To birds, the impoundments appear to be fresh water and they are lured into the impoundments as a place to feed, drink and/or rest. Until NESI covered these surface impoundments in January 1991, birds occasionally became entrapped in the oily substance and consequently perished.

Ground Water

The contents of the surface impoundments may have caused contamination of the shallow ground water. Records indicate that contamination was introduced during past monitoring well installations. It appears that drilling through contaminated areas without proper coring may have introduced wastes in the shallow ground water zone. This drilling was not done under DHS supervision.



The site lies on the seaward side of the Talbert Barrier project, which acts to artificially change the ground water flow to halt salt water migration into the Talbert Aquifer. As a result, the ground water beneath the site is characteristically brackish. While contamination is a concern, no known beneficial use for this ground water currently exists.

Upcoming Site Characterization Activities

To further evaluate the contamination present on site, NESI has submitted to DHS and other involved government agencies, a plan to conduct a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) for the site. The RI/FS will assess air, soil and ground water contamination and will identify potential cleanup alternatives. NESI submitted the RI/FS plans in March and expects to start implementation in September 1991, following approval of all workplans by DHS.

As part of the RI, a risk assessment will be prepared to evaluate any risks which may be posed by the site in its present condition. The risk assessment will be used to determine what type of remediation measures will be necessary.

Under the guidance of DHS and the Regional Water Quality Control Board, NESI will conduct a site investigation that includes installing new soil borings, sampling of waste material

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and resampling of existing ground water monitoring wells. New monitoring wells will also be installed and sampled.

Health & Safety Plan

The RI/FS workplan contains a Health & Safety Plan prescribing procedures that must be followed by all personnel while working on the site. The provisions of the plan will be mandatory to all personnel and subcontractors assigned to the project. The plan will provide for a Health and Safety Manager, who will be responsible for coordinating the site-specific health and safety procedures. The plan will include medical surveillance, air monitoring during all field work and mitigation measures in the event of any releases, training requirements, hazard assessment, personnel protective equipment specifications, field implementation procedures and audits. The Health and Safety Manager will be the contact for regulatory agencies on these matters.

Contingency Plan

A contingency plan providing response procedures to protect the health and safety of the community surrounding the site during related field activities has been prepared. Potential health risks from field activities have been identified and a program for monitoring and responding to those risks will be implemented. The plan provides for a Site Safety Officer, who will be responsible for directing on-site activities required by the plan. The plan also provides for the coordination of responsibilities of the fire department, police department, DHS and the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Removal Action

The Toxic Pits Cleanup Act of 1984 (TPCA) was enacted to eliminate the existence of unsafe, unlined hazardous waste surface impoundments to prevent the potential for leakage of their contents into ground water. Under TPCA, these surface impoundments are required to undergo closure.

The agreement between the DHS and NESI stipulated a removal action be conducted to remove all liquid hazardous wastes and all hazardous wastes containing free liquids from all surface impoundments. The removal action will protect ground water from further contamination and in addition will remove the threat to wildlife. NESI has prepared a removal action and sampling plan to initiate field activities in September 1991. As specified by the agreement, the removal action will be conducted by NESI, under the direct oversight of DHS and the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board. See insert for more information regarding removal action plan.

Site Investigation and Cleanup Process Tentative Schedule

Removal Action	September 1991 through April 1992
Remedial Investigation	September 1991 through April 1992
Feasibility Study	May 1992
Remedial Action Plan	December 1992
Design and Implementation Plan	January 1993 through January 1994
Certification	March 1994

Public Review

Community meetings to seek public input on proposed action will be held prior to conducting the Removal Action and before adopting the Remedial Action Plan.

Public Involvement Opportunities

DHS encourages public involvement in the site investigation and cleanup process and invites community input.

DHS and NESI have interviewed a number of community representatives in order to assess interests and concerns and to develop a public participation strategy that can meet those needs. The plan provides for a variety of public involvement opportunities including local information repositories, fact sheets, a mailing list, community meetings and participation in the local Ad Hoc Committee.

Ascon Landfill (NESI Site) Mailing List

If you are not currently on the Ascon mailing list and wish to be added, please fill out the attached coupon and mail it to: Public Participation Unit; Kristin Stultz; Department of Health Services, TSCP; 245 West Broadway, 3rd Floor; Long Beach, CA 90802

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

Comments _____

Yes, I am interested in receiving periodic project updates. Please add me to the Project Mailing List.

Yes, I am interested in attending the Ad Hoc Committee meetings.

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Information Repositories

We encourage you to visit the information repositories or contact one of the representatives if you would like additional site information or have concerns about the site you would like to share.

Huntington Beach Public Library
Cultural and Information Center
Main Street Branch, 525 Main Street
Huntington Beach, CA 92648
(714) 960-3344

Ms. Pat Davis
16561 Bolsa Chica Road Suite 201
Huntington Beach, CA 92648
NESI Representative

Huntington Beach Public Library
Banning Annex, 9281 Banning Avenue
Huntington Beach, CA 92646
(714) 375-5005

California Department of Health Services
Toxic Substances Control Program
245 West Broadway, 3rd Floor,
Long Beach, CA 90802

Project Contacts

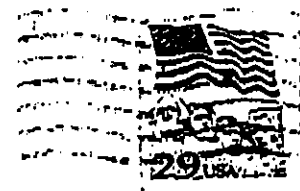
Representatives:
Haissam Salloum, DHS
Project Manager
(213) 590-4923

Kristin Stultz
Public Participation Specialist, DHS
(213) 590-4991

Tom Mungari
NESI Project Coordinator
(213) 644-3442

For More Information Ad Hoc Committee

A local Ad Hoc Committee has existed at this site since the mid 1980s. Originally established by the City Council, the committee provides the City and residents with a forum for monitoring site activities and providing input to the various involved agencies. If you are interested in being advised of future Ad Hoc Committee meetings, please indicate so on the enclosed mailing coupon.



Adrienne Morrison
Amigos de Bolsa Chica
P. O. Box 3748
Huntington Beach, CA 92605

Attention:
Ascon Landfill (NESI Site)
Hazardous Waste Investigation



California Department of Health Services
Toxic Substances Control Program

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Public Comment Period

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July 15 - August 16, 1991

DHS and the Santa Ana Regional Water Center Quality Control Board have ordered NESI investment Group to remove all liquid hazardous wastes and hazardous waste containing free liquids from one onsite pit and five surface impoundments. The removal action, to be conducted by NESI under agency oversight, will be implemented in accordance with the Removal Action Plan and will comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). More information regarding CEQA can be found on the reverse side of this insert.

DHS will be accepting written comments on the draft Removal Action Plan and Mitigated Negative Declaration through August 16, 1991. Comments will also be accepted at the community meeting. (see announcement on page I). Both documents are available for public review at several local information repositories. The repository locations and DHS mailing address are listed on the back of this fact sheet.

The Removal Action Plan details the procedures to be followed to remove liquid hazardous wastes from the site. The Regional water Quality Control board is requiring the removal to comply with the Toxic Pits Cleanup

Act of 1984 (TPCA). The removal is tentatively scheduled for October 1991.

The Mitigated Negative Declaration is being prepared in accordance with CEQA. It states that any negative environmental impacts which might result from this removal action can be controlled by implementing the referenced mitigation measures. These include:

- vapor suppression measures to control odors and organic vapor emissions that may occur while contaminated soil/waste is exposed during the removal action;
- wetting down the soil to control visible dust emissions along haul routes and areas where soil is being disturbed;
- coordination of traffic volumes and routes with the City of Huntington Beach; and
- control of noise levels during field activities. Noise levels are expected to increase during the removal action. Every effort will be made to ensure that excessive noise levels are not produced. Removal action activities will comply with the City of Huntington Beach noise ordinance.

Ascon Landfill (NESI Site) Public Comment Period

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The following information is intended to facilitate your understanding of CEQA and its applicability to the upcoming removal action.

Q. What is CEQA?

A. In passing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in 1970, the legislature set a forum for state and local agencies regulating or approving activities affecting the environment. CEQA applies to all activities that may have an effect on the environment.

Q. What is the purpose of CEQA?

A. The purpose of CEQA is to ensure that decision makers are fully informed of a proposed project's effects in the environment prior to approval. It also gives decision makers an opportunity to avoid or substantially reduce potential adverse environmental effects by imposing impact mitigation measures, including project alteration and alternative. In addition, it acts as an environmental alarm to alert the public and other officials of potential irreversible environmental damage.

Q. What is an Environmental Impact Report (EIR)?

A. An EIR or Environmental Impact Report is a detailed report/statement describing the

environmental effects of a project. The report also discusses measures to mitigate or prevent the effects.

Q. What is a Negative Declaration?

A. If a lead agency finds that there is no evidence or probable reason to believe that a project will have a significant effect on the environment, the lead agency prepares a Negative Declaration. If the agency determines that the project will cause minor impacts, the agency may issue a mitigated Negative Declaration that includes mitigation measures to abate the environmental impacts.

Q. What is the main difference between an EIR and Negative Declaration?

A. The main difference between an Environmental Impact Report and a Negative Declaration is the degree of environmental impacts under a Negative Declaration impacts are insignificant, temporary, and preventable. Under the EIR, impacts are significant and longer in duration.

Q. What are mitigation measure?

A. AB3180 requires public agencies to report or monitor the implementation of impact mitigation measures. AB3180 is triggered when a public agency adopts a mitigated Negative Declaration or completes the EIR. Mitigation measures include wetting soil to prevent fugitive dusts and monitoring air for unhealthy air emissions.