



Tenant Notification
Former Four Seasons Cleaners
13778 Doolittle Drive, San Leandro, CA
October 13, 2017

Indoor Air and Soil Vapor Testing

Background

The purpose of this notification is to inform tenants at the Marina Faire Shopping Center about plans to investigate indoor air and air in the soil beneath the building slab (sub-slab vapor) at a number of locations at the shopping center due to the apparent historic release of a common dry cleaning compound from the former Four Seasons Cleaners located at 13778 Doolittle Drive.

The current shopping center owner, now called Marina Faire, LP, acquired the shopping center in July 1978. Based on available records, it appears that the northern portion of the center was constructed in 1966 and the former Four Seasons Cleaners began operations that same year. The dry cleaner closed in 2015.

The former Four Seasons Cleaners used a dry cleaning compound called perchloroethene or tetrachloroethene or "PCE" to dry clean clothes reportedly until 2001, at which time it switched to a hydrocarbon based compound.

PCE is the most commonly used dry cleaning compound in California and throughout the US. PCE was likely spilled or leaked during past dry cleaning operations, perhaps from the time the dry cleaning business first began operation. It also may have been disposed of down the sanitary sewer. When PCE is released into the environment, it can break down into other volatile organic compounds. PCE and its breakdown products, including trichloroethene or "TCE", are all called volatile organic compounds or "VOCs".

The shopping center owner, which did not cause the problem, began investigating the situation in 2014. PCE has been found in the soil, soil vapor (the vapors in the air spaces between soil particles) and groundwater near the former Four Seasons Cleaners location. Investigations are continuing. The property owner has been and is currently working with Alameda County Department of Environmental Health ("ACDEH") to address the problem. The former Four Seasons Cleaners is now closed and substantial amounts of soil that contained PCE were removed from beneath the former dry cleaner and portions of the sewer and the building slab replaced on September 28, 2017.

Depending on the amount and duration of exposure, PCE and TCE can have adverse human health effects such as kidney and liver damage and have caused cancer in laboratory animals. According to the USEPA, TCE is carcinogenic to humans by all routes of exposure. Single (acute) or short-term exposure can potentially affect the developing fetus during pregnancy. In certain circumstances in the environment, PCE can naturally break down into TCE.

Status

Beginning in 2014, environmental assessment activities have been conducted in the building and the rear and front parking lots near the Four Season Cleaners facility. VOCs, including PCE and TCE, were detected under the former Four Season Cleaners, and under the front parking lot adjacent to the southwest of the former dry cleaner. The reported concentrations of TCE and PCE were at levels indicating potential risk for these compounds to enter as vapors into the indoor air of tenant units near the former Four Seasons Cleaners and along the sanitary sewer lines.

What Actions are Proposed?

At the property owner's direction and under a workplan approved by ACDEH, indoor air and sub-slab vapor will be sampled at a number of locations and tenancies throughout the shopping center. This work will be minimally invasive. The indoor air samples will be collected in small steel canisters that will be setup and left in the space for a period of approximately 8 hours during the day. Prior to sampling, products stored in the space will be inspected for chemicals that may interfere with the indoor air testing, and if found such chemicals will be relocated if possible. For sub-slab vapor samples, a contractor will bore one or more small holes in the slab to collect the sample. The holes in the slab will have a steel pin inserted to collect samples. The sampling point will be capped, and a steel cap about the size of a quarter will be placed over the sample point to allow resampling in the same location over time, without drilling another hole in the floor. Subsurface vapors will not be able to exit the vapor pin and enter the building. The vapor and indoor air samples will be analyzed for VOCs and evaluated to determine next steps. Work will be conducted in accordance with guidance documents for soil gas collection provided by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control ("DTSC").

If this assessment indicates that detected concentrations of certain VOCs exceed applicable environmental screening levels, additional testing may be required. In addition, there are means of mitigating potential health risks, including increasing the fresh air flow in a tenant unit which can reduce the potential concentrations indoors and/or increasing the air pressure in a tenant unit to reduce the potential for the migration of VOCs from the subsurface into the unit.

Project Contacts

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