

Plunkett, Steven, Env. Health

From: Arora, Asha@DTSC <Asha.Arora@dtsc.ca.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 3:05 PM
To: Plunkett, Steven, Env. Health
Subject: FW: Elemental Mercury spill
Attachments: 201401301135.pdf

Hi Steven,

Thank you so much for your update. I sent your email to HQ for a response.

Thank You
Asha

Asha Arora
Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)
Department of Toxic Substances Control
(510) 540-3874
Asha.Arora@dtsc.ca.gov

From: Plunkett, Steven, Env. Health [mailto:steven.plunkett@acgov.org]
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 2:03 PM
To: Arora, Asha@DTSC
Cc: Hugo, Susan, Env. Health; Weston, Robert, Env. Health
Subject: Elemental Mercury spill

Hello Asha,

This email is to inform DTSC that on January 21, 2014 ACEH was notified by Cal EMA OES and NRC (see attached pdf of OES report) that a resident in the City of Alameda detected elemental mercury while he was doing light landscaping work in his back yard. I contacted the property owner (Mr. Paul Meuser) on 1/22/14 and we discussed his observations; he stated that he discovered an estimated 10 tablespoons of mercury beneath 1 inch of soil cover, which he subsequently recovered the mercury and contacted Cal EMS OES. On 1/22/2014 I contacted Mary Mismar, the DTSC Duty officer and informed her of the spill. Mary recommended that I contact Adam Palmer of DTSC and discuss the release and response with him. I left a message for Adam on 1/23/2014 and on 1/27/2014

Adam responded and stated that typically this type of release is part of the DTSC Off Highway Emergency Response Program and he forwarded the information to Nancy McGee to coordinate the response, which was scheduled and completed on 1/29/2014.

During our initial response on 1/29/2014, Parc Specialty Contractors removed 2-55 gallon drums of mercury impacted soil in a limited area of the backyard (see attached map). The extent of the removal was approximately 2ft X 2ft X 18" deep. Nancy and I used the Lumix Mercury detector throughout the house and the only area where mercury was detected was inside the washing machine at a concentration of 0.4µg/m³, which is below EPA action levels. However, residual elemental mercury, very small droplets ≤1mm were visible in the hole and the Lumix instrument detected concentrations from inside the hole >200 µg/m³, while the Lumix instrument readings approximately 1 meter away from the excavation recorded concentrations of <5 µg/m³.

Alameda County CUPA does not direct site cleanup and remediation activities, therefore we request that DTSC coordinate any site investigation or cleanup activities that may be required.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact either myself, Robert Weston or Susan Hugo.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Best Regards,
Steven Plunkett
Hazardous Materials Specialist
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*"The bicycle is a curious invention,
The passenger is also its engine."*