



Update on Additional Sampling Activity

In this Pines Update....

This *Pines Update* provides information about the soil sampling and well testing program that is being conducted in the Pines Area of Investigation.

This and other past issues of the Pines Update newsletters can be found at:

www.pinesupdate.com.

The EPA also maintains a project website at:

www.epa.gov/region5/cleanup/pines/index.htm

Public Meeting on September 17

EPA is planning a public meeting for September 17 to discuss the ongoing investigation, sampling, and removal activities. EPA will provide information on the time and place the meeting will be held.

Who can I contact with questions?

Jacob Hassan, EPA
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Introduction

This edition of *Pines Update* (#24) is dedicated to providing information about the ongoing soils and well sampling programs, and removal activities planned at residential properties in the Pines Area of Investigation.

Background

The Pines Area of Investigation is the subject of an environmental study under the Superfund Alternative Program administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 5. In the Area of Investigation, coal combustion by-products (CCBs) are present. CCBs were previously used as road base and fill material by the Town of Pines and property owners both in rights-of-way and on private properties.

In November 2014, Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) and Brown Inc., under the authority of EPA and with the agency's oversight, instituted an extensive soil sampling program within the Town of Pines as part of the ongoing investigation work in the community to identify properties where CCBs were thought to be present. EPA and Town representatives initially selected nine properties for soil sampling to compare with soil samples previously collected from sites throughout the community.

Results of the testing on the nine sites indicated that seven of the properties have elevated levels of arsenic in the soil, likely stemming from the use of fly ash (a type of CCB) as fill material. NIPSCO reviewed the test results with EPA and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and has contacted affected property owners regarding the results and the need to remove soils with elevated levels of arsenic under EPA's Removal Action program.

Because several of the properties initially sampled were found to have elevated levels of arsenic, additional sampling was performed at other properties believed to include CCBs as fill material. The sampling was done to determine whether these soils contain arsenic above levels that might require removal.

Residents Can Request Private Property Sampling

We are still accepting requests for private property sampling. If requested and an access agreement is provided, properties are evaluated by conducting a visual inspection to determine if CCBs are present on the property. If they are, soil sampling will be conducted.

This sampling work is conducted with hand tools or by using small drilling rigs to minimize impacts to the properties being sampled. As needed, we will repair damage to lawns and landscaping when finished.

The constituents to be addressed by the soil sampling have been identified based on the results from the initial nine properties sampled and discussions with EPA. These constituents are: arsenic, thallium and lead.

Who do I contact to have my property evaluated for sampling?

Please contact Dr. Lisa Bradley of Haley & Aldrich, Inc. at 978-846-3463, or lbradley@haleyaldrich.com.

If you have questions about soil sampling, please contact:

Jacob Hassan, EPA
312-886-6864
hassan.jacob@epa.gov

Lisa Bradley, Haley & Aldrich
978-846-3463
lbradley@haleyaldrich.com

Additional Property Sampling and Access Agreements

NIPSCO has worked with EPA to identify additional properties for sampling to determine if there are other properties where soil removal work is necessary. Sampling has also been conducted at properties where owners have specifically requested sampling. Access agreements were obtained from owners of the properties to allow sampling. The sampling was conducted in May, June, and July of this year.

The sampling is conducted in a step-wise process. Visual inspections are conducted on each property to determine if CCBs are present outside of the rights-of-way. If no CCBs are identified across the property, a single composite soil sample is collected for analysis. If CCBs are identified only in the right-of-way, a composite sample of the material in that area is also collected for analysis. If CCBs are identified on the property, then quadrant soil sampling is conducted using the approach described in Pines Update #23.

In total, quadrant sampling has now been completed at 40 of the original 45 properties where CCBs were identified as present during the Remedial Investigation.

As of this writing, access agreements have also been obtained from 23 property owners who requested sampling be conducted on their properties. The majority of these properties have now been visually inspected, and CCBs were identified on five (5) properties, warranting quadrant sampling. Quadrant sampling was conducted on four (4) of these properties. We are awaiting access agreements from three (3) property owners who have requested testing. Additional sampling will be conducted on the remaining properties in the near future.

NIPSCO and Haley & Aldrich continue to work closely with EPA to gain access to properties for sampling where the property owners have not yet responded to our request to provide access.

Residents Can Request Private Well Testing

The Area of Investigation sampling results have shown that there are no unacceptable risks associated with CCBs in the shallow aquifer used by area wells. NIPSCO and Brown Inc., therefore, will be discontinuing bottled water service at a time agreed upon with the EPA.

Before that happens, the EPA has asked NIPSCO and Brown Inc. to offer to sample the wells at the homes receiving bottled water, as well as at the homes of the eligible residents that elected not to receive bottled water, and to those who previously declined offers for municipal water service. We have contacted residents eligible for this sampling and have completed private well sampling at 39 homes. We are still accepting requests for private well sampling for those eligible.

Well testing results will be provided to each well owner.

Who do I contact to have my well tested?

Please contact Dr. Lisa Bradley of Haley & Aldrich, Inc. at 978-846-3463, or lbradley@haleyaldrich.com.

If you have questions about well testing, please contact:

Erik Hardin, USEPA
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Lisa Bradley, Haley & Aldrich
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Removal Activities

The vast majority of additional properties that were sampled do not require any further action, and these residents will be notified directly. For those other properties where soil samples indicate higher levels, removal actions are being considered. Contaminated soil will be removed at properties where arsenic levels require remediation as directed by the Removal Work Plan.

Where soil removal work is necessary, NIPSCO will discuss the cleanup process with individual property owners, including restoring, repairing or replacing property affected during the cleanup process. Please note that NIPSCO will pay for all of the removal and restoration work conducted on each property. The property owner will not be responsible for paying for any of the sampling or removal work.

Reporting

Once the data are collected, validated and evaluated, a report of the results will be prepared. The results of the additional soil sampling will be compared to the results of the background sampling and surveys, and will be evaluated based on the methods used in the Human Health Risk Assessment.

Once the sampling and analyses are completed, a draft report will be submitted to EPA detailing the findings of the work, consistent with EPA protocol. Owners whose properties were sampled will obtain a copy of the information specific to their property.

Safety is Our #1 Concern!

Safety Corner



The sampling program described in this *Pines Update* will require the use of survey and/or sampling equipment, and our technicians will need to have enough room to conduct the work in a safe manner and ensure the integrity of the data collection. Safety tape and signs will be deployed at designated work areas throughout the course of this investigation.

Field Staff will be wearing identification (which includes photo identification badges) and high visibility vests.

Our Commitment....

NIPSCO and Brown are committed to keeping you informed on the progress of the investigation of the Pines Area of Investigation. Look for future *Pines Updates* to update you to our progress. We also have a website to provide continual updates on the project:

www.pinesupdate.com

Please contact the Communications Coordinator at the address listed below to be placed on the mailing list.

**Communications Coordinator
Brown Inc.
720 W. US Hwy 20
Michigan City, IN 46360**

If you have questions regarding the sampling discussed in this *Pines Update*, please contact:

**Lisa Bradley, Haley & Aldrich
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lbradley@haleyaldrich.com**

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