

## **TOSC Assistance to Region IV and VI Communities in First Quarter 2004**

From January to March of 2004, TOSC actively assisted 10 communities in Regions 4 and 6, including several communities new to the program. Several other communities have been inactive during the reporting period, but are expected to become active as cleanup work progresses in these areas. In addition, TOSC is continuing to pursue new communities, with several expected to become active during the second quarter of 2004.

Sites assisted in Region 4 include:

**Savannah, Georgia.** Since November 2003, TOSC has been assisting the Citizens for Environmental Justice community coalition by reviewing several documents related to lead and arsenic contamination of soil on the property of East Broad Elementary School and Matilda Park. TOSC has reviewed Off-Site Evaluation Work Plans for the former CSX Transportation, Inc. DePriest Signal Shop, and reviewed the scope of work for soil removal in the north courtyard of the elementary school, which took place following Christmas 2003. TOSC will continue to research environmental records on the site when visiting Georgia Environmental Protection Division offices in late April.

**Fort McClellan, Anniston, Alabama.** TOSC continues to work with the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) during the transfer of ownership of Fort McClellan from the U.S. Department of Defense to the Fort McClellan Joint Powers Authority (JPA). Fort McClellan covers over 45,00 acres in eastern Alabama, and was the site of weapons training and the U.S. Army's Chemical Warfare School. Since closure in 1999, the post has undergone numerous environmental investigations for underground storage tanks, groundwater contamination, landfill locations and contents, soil contamination and unexploded ordnance (UXO). TOSC has reviewed several of these reports to gather information on landfill impacts, impacts from firing ranges, and environmental impacts on wetlands and surface waters on the post. At the request of the RAB, TOSC researched several documents related to unexploded ordnance investigations and disposal in the Bravo and Eastern Bypass Areas of Fort McClellan, and will present findings during the April TAB meeting. Among the issues of concern to TOSC are the lack of standard quality assurance/quality control procedures for investigating and disposing of unexploded ordnance, investigations into the depth of clearance necessary to properly characterize and address UXO, and how institutional controls addressing the potential presence of UXO will be developed, implemented, and enforced in areas where redevelopment is planned or already underway.

**Citizens Against Pollution, Anniston, Alabama.** Anniston, Alabama faces PCB contamination from the operations at the Solutia, Inc. plant. PCBs were produced at the site from 1929 to 1971 by various companies including Monsanto Company, which later spun-off the PCB-manufacturing portion of the company to form Solutia. PCBs were transported off-site primarily through surface water runoff during rainstorms into drainage ditches and Snow Creek.

PCBs were also directly deposited off-site during relocation of sediments, foundry sand, and floodplain soils, with the entire area of contamination being designated as the Anniston PCB Site. In December 2003, TOSC reviewed the Non Time Critical Removal Action Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) Report prepared by Solutia. The EE/CA summarizes available data collected by EPA and Solutia, and identifies the objectives of the removal action, analyzes the effectiveness and cost of implementing the removal action, and recommends a preferred removal alternative. Comments were sent to Citizens Against Pollution (CAP) for incorporation into their comments and questions about the EE/CA and the site. Work continues in Anniston as the EE/CA receives further evaluation, and TOSC has committed to providing additional assistance to CAP as needed. TOSC work in Anniston has led to a developing relationship with the Brownfield Institute, a non-profit organization currently helping the Anniston community with redevelopment efforts in the city, and looking ahead to revitalization opportunities with the Anniston PCB site. TOSC and TAB staff will continue to cultivate this relationship and assist the Brownfield Institute as requested.

Sites assisted in Region 6 by TOSC include:

**Calcasieu League for Environmental Action Now (CLEAN), Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana.**

The parish of Calcasieu lies within the southwestern part of the state of Louisiana and has a population of over 183,000. This is a heavily industrialized area that has been active since the 1920's, consisting of an array of petrochemical and other facilities that produce a wide variety of industrial chemicals and products. In March 2003, TOSC met with Wilma Subra to discuss collaboration on a study for members of the Calcasieu League for Environmental Action Now (CLEAN) investigating accidental and fugitive toxic air emissions by industries in Calcasieu Parish. Concern within the community over accidental releases of contaminants is significant relative to the permitted releases and, therefore CLEAN feels permitted emissions do not truly reflect actual emissions in the Parish. The research will focus on determining the significance of accidental releases to regulated permit limits established by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ). TOSC will investigate a number of reports submitted to LDEQ by these facilities for comparison with permit conditions and normal emission rates.

This study will not only provide data about these accidental releases but it will also allow TOSC to develop a model (or tool) for other communities to use when interested in researching this type of information for facilities in their area. Through personally researching this information, communities will become knowledgeable about the data they have collected. This will allow the community-at large to better understand the nature and extent of emissions to which they might be exposed, and therefore, will be a more informed participant in environmental decisions regarding their community.

TOSC signed a letter of agreement with CLEAN in June 2003 detailing the scope of this study. TOSC is researching information on 20 facilities in Calcasieu Parish. With some direction from LDEQ and Wilma Subra, TOSC has accessed several annual reports and other documents that will help bring this project to a close. TOSC is currently working on obtaining permit information

from these facilities to compare the permitted amounts to actual releases. TOSC is continuing to work with LDEQ in researching information for this study and upon final evaluations by the community and other interested parties is also looking into possible journals for publication of this work.

**Calcasieu Estuary Community Task Force.** The Calcasieu Estuary includes the Calcasieu River and surrounding areas reaching from the saltwater/freshwater barrier to Moss Lake in Calcasieu Parish. In 1999, EPA decided to conduct a federally led Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study to evaluate the sediments in the estuary. This has included the Phase I and II workplans on the estuary, the Baseline Environmental Risk Assessment (BERA) and the Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA). In April 2003, EPA Region 6 was in Lake Charles, LA for an informational meeting regarding the remedial investigation and draft report that was being released for public comments. Certain community members of the Calcasieu Estuary Community Task Force felt the community should be provided some means of obtaining technical assistance in understanding the documents presented to them. TOSC met with members of the Task Force and a letter of agreement was signed stating that TOSC would assist the community in this document review process. In July, TOSC with the assistance of university experts in contaminated sediments reviewed the remedial investigation report. TOSC provided this technical review to the community members and assisted them in formulating their comments for inclusion during the public comment period. As future EPA work is ongoing, TOSC will continue to assist the community task force members with the review of technical documents, including the Calcasieu Estuary Feasibility Study upon release.

**Corpus Christi, Texas.** TOSC began to work with Citizens for Environmental Justice (CFEJ) in 2001, a group representing a largely Hispanic community in Corpus Christi, Texas. Corpus Christi is a city of some 380,000 residents on the Texas Gulf Coast. CFEJ members are worried about the environmental impact on their community of contaminants from oil refineries and approximately 40 old landfills. The outreach team has provided assistance to the community with numerous efforts including an environmental workshop and facilitation of federal, state and community meetings. TOSC has provided the seed funding for the design of a health study on elevated heart birth defects in Corpus Christi. This health study is being undertaken by two professors from Michigan State University, Dr. Karen Chou who is also a LSU TOSC affiliated Adjunct Research Professor of Toxicology, and Dr. Wilfried Karmaus, Physician and Professor of Epidemiology. The researchers are currently pursuing external funding for the health study. TOSC recently completed a review of the US EPA Preliminary Assessment/Site Inspection (PA/SI) for the Cunningham and Greenwood Landfills and drafted a groundwater sampling strategy plan for the landfills. The outreach team also reviewed a birth defects study prepared by the Texas Department of Health. TOSC is currently looking into the draft of a new LOA that would outline new and continuing activities with CFEJ. Outreach team member Tomeka Prioleau has taken over as TOSC team lead with the community group.

**Shreveport, Louisiana.** TOSC has worked with the Shreveport, Louisiana community group Residents for Air Neutralization (RAN) since August 2002. RAN's primary concern is with

exposures from a lubricating oil refinery that sits in the middle of several neighborhoods. The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) has worked in the community for the last several years, and a health consultation prepared by ATSDR was completed in August of 2003 and went out for public comments. TOSC was present for the release meeting.

In February 2003, TOSC, along with ATSDR, presented an environmental workshop addressing specific concerns of RAN. In April of 2003, TOSC gave a presentation on the H<sub>2</sub>S and SO<sub>2</sub> air monitors. RAN requested these monitors, and LDEQ placed the monitors near the community in November of 2002. Since then ATSDR has recommended continued monitoring of H<sub>2</sub>S and SO<sub>2</sub> and long-term air sampling for VOCs. The final draft of the ATSDR health consultation which addressed public comments should be out by May 2004.

The outreach team is currently assisting the community group in pursuing a small environmental justice grant. A community health fair will be given by LADHH in the next several months. TOSC has offered assistance in this endeavor, and will continue their efforts with the community group and will attend community meetings as needed.

**Alsen, Louisiana.** The Alsen community is located on the outskirts of Baton Rouge, Louisiana and has been inundated with industrial facilities, landfills and two Superfund sites. TOSC has worked in the Alsen community for a number of years, but only recently with the Alsen Environmental Justice Community Organization. TOSC's contact with this organization was initiated by a representative from LDEQ who knew of the community's interest in funding opportunities. TOSC has provided the community group with information on various funding opportunities, and has primarily been focusing on assisting the group with applying for EPA's Environmental Justice Hazardous Substance Research Small Grant (EJ Grant). TOSC met with the community to provide information to the group about the grant and requirements for applying. After the community decided to pursue the grant, TOSC worked to obtain more information about their interests and goals for a proposed project. TOSC created a template for the EJ Grant and provided this to assist the community in completing their grant application. TOSC will compile demographic and geographic information for the Alsen community, as well as participate in community meetings when appropriate. TOSC is continuing to seek and provide information to the group on future grant opportunities.

TOSC has also provided this group with information on a site in their area that has been proposed for the National Priorities List (NPL), Devils Swamp Lake, and is in the process of discussing what steps to take regarding this. TOSC has also started gathering information for the group about applying for a TAG (Technical Assistance Grant) offered to some communities with a proposed NPL site.

**Iberville Parish, Louisiana.** The director of CCIP, Ms. Albertha Hasten, has an interest in implementing educational workshops on potential effects of water contamination as well as finding funding for several other studies. As a result, TOSC has been working with CCIP seeking and providing information on future grant opportunities. More recently, TOSC discussed and

provided information to the group on the Environmental Justice Hazardous Substance Research Small Grant Program as well as a template to assist the community in preparing their application. TOSC will continue to work with CCIP on future projects as they arise.

**El Paso, Texas.** TOSC continues its work with the Neighborhood Associations of El Paso addressing and understanding residential properties with elevated levels of lead and arsenic in soil. Investigations into the source or sources of the lead and arsenic indicate possible contributions from a now shuttered ASARCO smelter on the west side of the City, Mexican industries that still release lead-containing emissions, and from automobiles crossing from Mexico, where leaded gasoline is still used, into El Paso. The Neighborhood Association is fighting to prevent listing on the National Priorities List (NPL or Superfund), fearing a decrease in property values, stigma associated with a listing, and costly, and often unnecessary, residential cleanup activities.

TOSC has visited El Paso several times since September 2002 to meet with representatives of the Neighborhood Association and participate in meetings with local, state, and federal environmental and health officials. Most recently, TOSC participated in a facilitated meeting (October 2003) with the Neighborhood Association, the U.S. EPA, the Texas Department of Public Health, Texas Department of Environmental Quality, and local health agencies and city officials. Discussion centered on the inclusion of portions of the city on the NPL. As of the date of this report, there is still controversy over what areas to include on the NPL, and how much longer EPA can continue to fund cleanups at the homes of El Paso residents affected by elevated levels of lead and arsenic. The Community and TOSC are currently investigating the affect of NPL listing on property values.

A notable outcome of the October 2003 facilitated meeting was EPA's completion in March 2004, at the insistence of the community, of a bioavailability study for lead in residential soil. Results of the study led to EPA raising the action level of lead in soil from 500 parts per million (ppm) (EPA's standard for the El Paso homes) to 640 ppm. As a result of this new level, it is expected that a significant number of homes will not have soil removed and replaced. The community is waiting for EPA's revised list and map of targeted houses.