

Viewpoints

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THIS NEWSLETTER IS COMPILED AND PUBLISHED BY THE MIDDLEPORT COMMUNITY ADVISORY PANEL. IT IS THE EXPRESS INTENT OF THE CAP TO PROVIDE RESIDENTS OF MIDDLEPORT CREDIBLE INFORMATION REGARDING COMMUNITY ISSUES, FMC PLANT ACTIVITIES, AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS.

What number triggers a cleanup?

By Rebecca Schweigert, Middleport CAP member



One of the greatest areas of confusion in the entire testing and remediation efforts going on in Middleport

concerns soil sampling results. Most people do not understand that there are two types of numbers that are being considered. The first number is the "trigger" number and the second is the "remediation" number. These refer to the test results for soil arsenic levels from specific properties. Now, the number that everyone seems to be familiar with

is "20 ppm (parts per million)" of arsenic in soil.

The Agencies determined that it would be acceptable to dig down to a 20 ppm soil arsenic level for the remediation project on South Main and South Vernon Streets based on results from residential properties in Gasport that were tested in 2002. Seven Gasport residential

properties that were tested, had soil arsenic levels between 1 and 21 ppm.

Because Gasport and Middleport are similar, the Agencies determined that probably Middleport's residential properties would have a similar arsenic

*"Therefore,
having a soil
sample test result
higher than 20 ppm
does not
automatically mean
your property needs
remediation."*

Rebecca Schweigert

What number triggers a clean up?

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content as Gasport's if FMC wasn't in the picture.

This 20 ppm soil arsenic level is what the properties were cleaned up to, not the number that triggered clean up work. This is where the confusion is. The trigger number, i.e., the parts per million level in any given property that will

are trying to prevent a possible one cancer in a one in 10,000 to one in 1,000,000 range that could theoretically be caused by arsenic exposure. Five of the properties on South Vernon Street (31 through 39) did have arsenic levels in the soil along the fence that ran between these properties and FMC and needed to be cleaned.



The four properties across the street from FMC (38 and 40 S. Vernon and 73 and 75 S. Main) were remediated because an old storm sewer drainage pipe ran from FMC along the fence line, across the street, between these properties, and then emptied into Jeddo Creek. The cleanup stopped at the sidewalk as the portion of the drainpipe that ran from the sidewalk to Jeddo Creek was replaced when the State repaired Main Street in 1995. The agencies wanted the pipe removed and remediated those entire yards as a precautionary

measure. make the Agencies decide it needs to be cleaned, has not yet been determined for the current round of testing along Culvert 105 and the tributary (Jeddo Creek) or for the upcoming air deposition testing. Therefore, having a soil sampling test result higher than 20 ppm does not automatically mean your property needs remediation. The trigger number will be determined at a later date, hopefully with a lot of input from the Village residents who are involved in the testing.

Something that many residents may not be aware of is that the remediation done on South Vernon and South Main Streets was done mostly as a preventative measure.

The agencies have maintained that they

are trying to prevent a possible one cancer in a one in 10,000 to one in 1,000,000 range that could theoretically be caused by arsenic exposure.

If you participated in the biomonitoring study done last summer by Exponent, you may have had your property tested. This involved testing at least four areas in a yard to determine the average level of soil arsenic. Any upcoming testing involves several (at least four) soil sampling locations on a property because a single result cannot satisfactorily determine the soil arsenic level on a property.

Again, a sample result higher than 20 ppm of soil arsenic does not automatically mean your property needs remediation.

I hope this information helps residents of Middleport understand a little better what is happening in our friendly little Village.