

# Calabrese Construction Company Site

JULY 1998

This fact sheet was developed by the CT Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Waterbury Health Department to provide information and answer questions about the Calabrese Construction site on Store Avenue.



## **Site Background:**

The Calabrese Construction site is located at the end of Store Avenue. During the late 1980's a portion of this 7 acre site was excavated for a proposed development. As a result, landfilled materials including construction debris, capacitors and rusted drums were brought to the surface. At this time, local health authorities ordered work activities to stop in an effort to protect nearby residents and workers from being exposed to contaminants. Visible capacitors and contaminated soils were removed. However, over time waste materials re-surfaced. This area was originally part of a larger 30 acre site used by Scovill Manufacturing Company for disposing of fly ash, cinder and demolition debris.

## **What Hazards Were Identified On The Site?**

Polychlorinated biphenyls or PCBs were found in soils and waste piles on the site. PCBs are a family of chemicals once valued for their insulating and nonflammable properties. These chemicals are very stable so they last a long time in the environment. PCBs were the result of leaking capacitors. People can be exposed to PCBs by direct contact with the skin, by eating contaminated soil, or by inhalation of contaminated dust.

Nickel plating wastes were also identified on-site. There is not enough information to say what other chemicals were present in the waste material and at what levels.

In addition to the chemical contamination, there were a lot of physical hazards on the site including open pits, tripping hazards and sharp objects.

## **I Live Near The Calabrese Site. Have I been Exposed And Will I Get Sick?**

People who trespassed on the site may have been exposed to PCBs if they came in direct contact with contaminated soils. If you have never visited the site, it is unlikely that you have come in contact with the waste. If you did go on the site, any adverse health effects vary according to

- ⇒how long you were exposed
- ⇒how much contamination you were exposed to
- ⇒how you were exposed (skin contact, ingestion, inhalation)

Exposure to PCBs has been shown to cause increases in blood fats, increases in certain liver and kidney enzymes and chloracne, a rash similar to acne. Acute symptoms associated with exposure to PCBs are unlikely. The EPA and the federal Department of Health and Human Services have determined that PCBs probably cause cancer in humans, however, this information comes from animal studies. Studies of workers, exposed to higher levels of PCBs than expected in environmental exposures, do not provide enough information to determine if PCBs cause cancer in humans.

## **What Is Being Done To Clean Up The Site?**

In the past, a few removals have occurred to remove the visible capacitors in waste piles. More recently, CT DEP and their consultants have removed the waste piles and back filled the holes that were on site. Waste material is still present beneath the surface. *While a 12 inch cap of sand and clean soil will prevent exposure to the contaminated waste it is important that people stay off the site to ensure that the temporary cap remains intact and exposed waste is not brought to the surface.*

In the future, the CT DEP will be investigating the boundaries of the 30 acre Scovill landfill of which the Calabrese site was a part.

## **Who Can I Call For More Information?**

If you have questions about health issues you can call:

Jennifer Kertanis, CT DPH

860-509-7742

or

Dr. Dada Jabbour

Waterbury Health Department

203-574-6780

If you have questions about the site clean-up you can call:

Mike McDaniel, CT DEP

