

# Topps Cleaners

Fair Lawn Borough, Bergen County

March 2008

## Vapor intrusion study expanded to additional homes on Ramapo & Ramsey Terraces

Anderson Mulholland and Associates, Inc. (AMAI), the environmental consultant representing the owner the former Topps Cleaners property, is continuing its vapor intrusion investigation at the residential area southeast of the site. AMAI is expanding the investigation to include 20 more homes on Ramapo Terrace and the north side of Ramsey Terrace. The homeowners have been contacted and sub-slab sampling of the air beneath these homes began in late February.

To date AMAI has conducted sub-slab and/or indoor air sampling at 34 homes on Plaza Road, Ramapo Terrace, Ramsey Terrace and Townley Road to evaluate whether vapor intrusion was occurring. The sampling revealed that the air inside eight homes had PCE vapors exceeding the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) Indoor Air Screening Level (IASL) of three micrograms per cubic meter (3 ug/m<sup>3</sup>) for this compound. AMAI has installed subsurface depressurization systems to address the vapors at six of these homes. The owners of the other two residences have not yet accepted offers to install the systems. AMAI continues to monitor the residences where indoor air sampling indicated concentrations below the IASL, but where sub-slab sample concentrations were significantly elevated. The next quarterly indoor air sampling is taking place this month.

### Groundwater Investigation

As part of the remedial investigation, AMAI has installed 50 ground water monitor wells both on-site and off-site of the former Topps property. Sampling of the monitor wells has shown PCE concentrations exceeding NJDEP's vapor intrusion Ground Water Screening Level (GWSL) of one part per billion (1 ppb) for this compound. AMAI plans to install two additional ground water monitor wells between Ramsey Terrace and Sanford Road this spring to further delineate the ground water contamination.

### Topps Property Cleanup

The ERH system continues to operate and testing has revealed that it is effectively removing the PCE contamination from the soil and ground water at the former Topps property. NJDEP expects that the system can be shut down as early as this spring.

**For more information please contact Heather Swartz, NJDEP Community Relations Coordinator, at (609) 984-7135, or write to [Toppsinfo@amaiconsult.com](mailto:Toppsinfo@amaiconsult.com).**

**Site documents are available for review in the reference section of the Maurice M. Pine Library at 10-01 Fair Lawn Avenue.**

### Background

Topps Cleaners operated at 22-02 Fair Lawn Avenue between 1950 and 2004. Soil and ground water at the property were contaminated with the dry cleaning fluid tetrachloroethene (also known as perchloroethylene, or PCE), a volatile organic compound. Exposure to PCE is linked to health problems. The Topps property owner began a remedial investigation in 2003 to evaluate the extent of the contamination in the soil and ground water and develop a cleanup plan. In 2005, after sampling showed that ground water contaminated with PCE had migrated off site to a nearby residential area, NJDEP required the Topps property owner to investigate whether PCE vapors were migrating into the overlying homes (a process known as "vapor intrusion"). Sampling showed the air inside some homes had PCE vapors at concentrations exceeding NJDEP's screening level for this compound. The Topps property owner is installing subsurface depressurization systems (the same systems used to reduce radon gas) at the homes to address the PCE vapors. The property owner also installed an Electrical Resistance Heating (ERH) system at the former Topps facility in the spring of 2007 to remove the PCE at the site. The system uniformly heats the soil and ground water to drive off the volatile contamination, which is captured by a carbon filtration system.

**New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection  
Site Remediation Program  
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