



CITY OF ALGONA
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June 27, 2013

Josh Baldi
Regional Director, Northwest Region
Department of Ecology - NWRO
3190 160th Ave SE
Bellevue, WA 98008-5452

Subject: Additional Indoor Air Sampling Needed in City of Algona

Dear Mr. Baldi:

As the Mayor of the City of Algona (the City), it is my responsibility to keep my residents not only informed, but safe and free of potential exposure to any contaminants that may have been released from the Auburn facility. We are generally pleased that the Department of Ecology (Ecology) has required Boeing to take more aggressive steps to investigate the releases of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) originating from Boeing Auburn facility and to assess the potential health impacts on the residents of the City.

However, as evidenced by the community positions and reaction at the open house meeting conducted on June 13th, the community does not feel that enough is being done. While we are pleased that Boeing, under Ecology's direction and oversight, has begun assessing vapor intrusion (VI) risks by conducting building surveys (in advance of indoor air sampling) in a small subset of homes in northeastern Algona, we request that Ecology require Boeing to expand the indoor air sampling area to include other areas in northern Algona that are potentially impacted by the VOC releases from the Auburn facility.

The direct push groundwater data collected this past Spring indicates that VOCs (including TCE, vinyl chloride, cis-1,2-DCE, and acetone) were detected in several groundwater samples in residential areas north of 8th Ave North and east of Algona Boulevard North. Two of these contaminants, TCE and vinyl chloride, exceeded their preliminary concern levels (PCLs). Yet Ecology has allowed Boeing to focus the current indoor air sampling only on homes within the immediate vicinity of these PCL exceedances in the far northeast corner of the City, and not at other locations in the northern Algona neighborhood where these contaminants were also detected in the shallow groundwater. Many samples were drawn from shallow probes on elevated streets.

Given the admitted uncertainty regarding the groundwater flow conditions in this area and the fact that the exact delineation of the shallow VOC plume in groundwater is unknown, the existing data establishes that it is entirely possible that VOCs exceeding PCLs exist in other areas of northern Algona that have not yet been tested.

Several City residents whose homes were not selected for indoor air sampling have expressed extreme concerns about whether they may be at risk, yet Ecology has permitted Boeing to choose not to assess this potential risk. Many, but not all, of these residents expressed their concerns directly to Ecology at the June 13th open house. Homeowners questioned the panel at the open house, and have questioned me on numerous occasions, as to why their homes are not being tested while their next door neighbors' homes are being tested. Some of these homeowners are pregnant or have small children, and these are the residents that are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of indoor air contamination.

The exclusion of a number of homes from the indoor air sampling plan has caused great strain and concern to our residents. It has been difficult for me to explain to these residents why they have been excluded from the VI testing and what the potential risks to their health may be. As Mayor, they look to me for answers that I currently cannot provide. Without additional indoor air sampling in other parts of northern Algona, we are very concerned that some residents will prematurely jump to conclusions and reach ill-informed conclusions on what is happening. Knowing my residents and their questions regarding Ecology's intent, any indoor air sampling program that excludes certain homes will be looked upon suspiciously.

For the reasons stated above, the City requests that all of the residential properties bounded by 8th Ave North on the south, Algona Boulevard North on the west, Boundary Boulevard on the north, and Chicago Avenue on the east be included in the indoor air sampling program that is currently underway. Ecology should exercise its authority to require a full spectrum of testing and analysis that will provide the residents in this neighborhood with some reassurance that Ecology is truly committed to protecting the health of all of the people of Washington.

If you have any questions please contact me at (253) 261-1372 or mayor@algonawa.gov.

Regards,



David E. Hill

Mayor, City of Algona

cc: William Thomas, Councilmember
Lynda Osborn, Councilmember
Ed Britz, Councilmember
Paul Mallery, Councilmember
Tim Fairley, Councilmember
Diana Quinn, City Administrator