

## Frequently Asked Questions – 700 South 1600 East PCE Plume Drilling

### Why is VA conducting drilling this summer?

VA is currently in the process of a groundwater Remedial Investigation regarding a Superfund site located on the East Bench in Salt Lake City.

Groundwater contamination from tetrachloroethylene (also known as perchloroethylene or PCE) was first detected in the 1990s at the Mount Olivet Cemetery irrigation well. In 2013, the site was added to the EPA's National Priorities List and is called the "700 South 1600 East PCE Plume." An exact location of the PCE source has yet to be determined, but VA was identified as a potential responsible party because of their former use of PCE in a dry-cleaning facility at the George E. Wahlen VA Medical Center in the 1970s.

From 2015 to 2017, VA conducted field work focusing on vapor intrusion into homes. VA sampled indoor air of 54 structures. Additionally, VA sampled groundwater from 42 locations and surface water from 50 locations, in addition to soil samples. VA installed a whole-home air purifier in the only structure that tested above removal action level and continues to monitor the air in this structure. Currently, VA is awaiting approval of a report of the 2015 through 2017 field work.

In the summer of 2018, VA will begin installing shallow and deep monitoring wells to help trace the PCE plume to the source. The well installations, along with groundwater sampling, soil-gas analysis and collection of surface water samples will be used to define the dimensions and extent of the plume and to support the development of remedial methods.

### How long does it take to drill a well?

It depends on the depth of the well. For this project, we have both deep and shallow wells. The deep wells are a single well in one location and many of the shallow wells are well pairs (two wells in one location). A deep well will take about 4 to 5 weeks to complete. A shallow well pair will take about 4 to 7 days to complete. Information will be provided to the local residents at least one week prior to the start of drilling to notify them of how they may be impacted.

### How loud will the drilling be and what time of day will you be drilling?

The noise from both the roto-sonic or mini-sonic drill rigs come from the diesel motor that runs the drill and the actual drilling itself. Drilling can result in elevated noise, similar to equipment you may see at a construction site -- like a backhoe.

The Salt Lake County Health department oversees the county's noise regulation, which includes Salt Lake City. In general, loud noises are prohibited between the hours of 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. The contractor performing the drilling will acquire a temporary noise permit from Salt Lake County before the start of drilling. This permit includes a limit on the time of day that drilling can happen and also requires the contractor to specify how they will reduce noise.

To reduce disruption to the residents, the contractor will first comply with the restrictions of the temporary noise permit. Second, the contractor is proposing to not start drilling before 7:30 a.m. and will generally conclude before 6 p.m. Best management practices (BMP) will also be implemented to reduce noise to the extent practical. For example, one BMP would be to place the drill rig with the back of the drill rig facing away from the closest houses. Also, drill rigs will not be allowed to excessively idle.

### **Will there be vibration from drilling that could disturb my home?**

Sonic drilling uses a high frequency vibration to vibrate the drill casing, causing soil to move and allowing the drill tip to advance. Extensive experience across the country with sonic drilling in residential areas suggests that vibrations from a sonic drill rig are generally not felt by residents nor affect local structures. The selected contractor has performed extensive sonic drilling in residential areas around Hill Air Force Base, with no complaints or concerns related to vibration.

### **Will the drill rig emissions smell or affect air quality?**

You will notice when the drilling rig is running. The sonic drill rigs have diesel engines that will be running while the drilling is being performed. All drill rigs must comply with applicable air standards, and each drill rig is inspected each day to ensure it is running properly and not emitting excessive emissions. Also, very little to no dust is generated while drilling.

### **Will local traffic be affected by drill rigs?**

Every effort will be made to minimize disruption to local traffic, however, some well locations will require diverting traffic, a temporary lane closure, or street parking may be temporarily limited in the area around the drill rig. As a condition of receiving a permit by Salt Lake City to drill in the street, a traffic control plan must be approved by the city. The purpose of the traffic control plan is to minimize disruption to traffic to the extent possible, and to keep the workers and residents safe. Drilling activities will not block driveway access.

### **Where can I get more information?**

Visit our website at <http://pceplume-700s1600e.net> or contact:

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