

ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet



ASARCO Superfund Site, Ruston/Tacoma, Washington

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10

March 2006

MC Construction set to purchase Asarco smelter site

Asarco is planning to sell its 67-acre former smelter property in Ruston to MC Construction of Lacey, Washington. As part of the sale agreement, MC Construction will be responsible for the remaining smelter cleanup work, as well as cleanup of some adjacent lands. Residential yard cleanups in North Tacoma will continue to be funded through the Asarco trust fund.

EPA must lift a lien on the smelter property before the sale can proceed. This will not occur until EPA has reached agreement with MC Construction on taking over the cleanup. EPA and MC Construction have already begun negotiating a legal agreement, called a Consent Decree, for the remaining cleanup work. The draft Consent Decree is expected to be completed in April and will be made available for public comment. A public meeting will also be scheduled during the comment period.

Yard cleanups in North Tacoma to continue

The Asarco trust fund will be providing \$2.5 million to continue residential yard cleanups in Tacoma in 2006. MRC Construction (no connection to MC Construction) will continue to perform the cleanup work. They expect to complete about 150 yards this year. A schedule of which yards will be cleaned up this year should be available by the end of March. MRC will contact homeowners directly to schedule yard cleanups.

About 200 yards are currently on the waiting list to be cleaned up, but only 150 yards can be completed this year. If your yard has already been sampled it may still be a year or more before the cleanup can be done.

Results for yards sampled last summer

Due to the Asarco bankruptcy, soil samples collected last summer from about 50 yards have not yet been analyzed. MRC has agreed to take over management of the residential sampling program and will begin analyzing these samples

Asarco Information Center is back!

MRC has agreed to reopen the **Asarco Information Center**, which was closed after Asarco declared bankruptcy last year. It will be housed at its previous location at the old Ruston School, 5219 North Shirley Street. It will be open from 2:00 until 5:00 pm, Monday through Thursday. The number is **(253) 759-6015**. The Center staff can provide you with information about the residential yard sampling and cleanup program, including sampling results and scheduling.

soon. MRC will contact homeowners directly, as soon as the sample results are available. You can also call the **Asarco Information Center** (253) 759-6015 to check on the status of your results.

Frequently asked questions

When are you going to sample our yard?

EPA expects to sample about 300 more yards in 2006, depending on available funding. Sampling will be conducted in Zone 4 of the Ruston/North Tacoma Study Area. A map of the sampling and cleanup boundaries can be found on EPA's website at <http://yosemite.epa.gov/R10/cleanup.nsf/sites/Asarco>. All sampling will be completed in one to three years.

Are free health screenings still available?

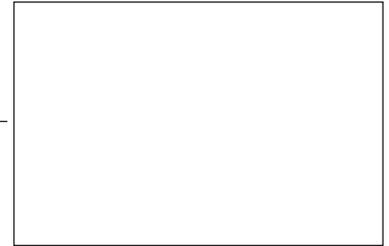
No. The health screenings were conducted by Asarco but are no longer available due to the bankruptcy.

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U. S. Environmental Protection Agency

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ECRWSS Postal Patron

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*ASARCO Finds Buyer
for Smelter Site
Ruston/Tacoma, WA
March 2006*



Alternative formats are available. For reasonable accommodation, please call Jeanne O'Dell. TTY users, please call the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339.

Frequently asked questions *continued*

Can I clean up my own yard and take the contaminated soil to the Asarco site?

You may choose to clean up your own yard, however, you can not take the soil to the Asarco site. MRC is the only authorized contractor who can dispose of contaminated residential soils on the Asarco site.

Can MRC take the soil to the Asarco site if I clean up my own yard?

This would need to be worked out between MRC, Asarco (or MC Construction), and the homeowner.

Will I be reimbursed for cleanup costs if I do the work myself?

No. The Asarco trust fund cannot be used to cover costs paid by homeowners to clean up their own yards.

How long will it take until all the yards are cleaned up?

EPA expects it will take up to three years before all the yard cleanups have been completed.

What should I do until my yard is cleaned up?

If you are concerned about possible contamination, you can limit potential exposure by making sure bare soil areas are covered with beauty bark, clean topsoil, or other material.

For more information, please contact the Asarco Information Center (see page 1) or:

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This fact sheet was sent to all mailing addresses within the project area. If you would like to receive future mailings about this site and are not on our regular mailing list, please contact Jeanne O'Dell. You may also request to be removed from the mailing list at any time.