

# Health Consultation

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GULF COAST RECYCLING

TAMPA, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA

EPA FACILITY ID: FLD004092839

FEBRUARY 10, 2003

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

Division of Health Assessment and Consultation

Atlanta, Georgia 30333

## **Health Consultation: A Note of Explanation**

An ATSDR health consultation is a verbal or written response from ATSDR to a specific request for information about health risks related to a specific site, a chemical release, or the presence of hazardous material. In order to prevent or mitigate exposures, a consultation may lead to specific actions, such as restricting use of or replacing water supplies; intensifying environmental sampling; restricting site access; or removing the contaminated material.

In addition, consultations may recommend additional public health actions, such as conducting health surveillance activities to evaluate exposure or trends in adverse health outcomes; conducting biological indicators of exposure studies to assess exposure; and providing health education for health care providers and community members. This concludes the health consultation process for this site, unless additional information is obtained by ATSDR which, in the Agency's opinion, indicates a need to revise or append the conclusions previously issued.

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**HEALTH CONSULTATION**

**GULF COAST RECYCLING**

**TAMPA, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**EPA FACILITY ID: FLD004092839**

**Prepared by:**

**Florida Department of Health Bureau of Environmental Epidemiology  
Under a Cooperative Agreement with the  
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry**

## Statement of Issues

The purpose of this health consultation is follow-up on a recommendation in an earlier consult to determine if two children who, in September 1999, were found to have elevated blood lead levels continue to have elevated blood lead levels. The children live near the Gulf Coast Recycling (GCR) facility in Tampa, Florida. This process will help the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) determine appropriate public health actions.

FDOH developed this consultation under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). The conclusions and recommendations of this consultation are only applicable to the participants of this investigation.

## Discussion

GCR is located at 1901 North 66<sup>th</sup> Street in Hillsborough County in Tampa, Florida. GCR began operating at this location in 1964. Currently, GCR is a secondary lead smelter, recovering lead from lead-acid batteries. During the mid 1970s, GCR buried battery casings on-site.

In 1998, consultants for GCR sampled soils near the site and found high levels of lead in the ditches along North 66<sup>th</sup> Street. In May 1999, the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requested FDOH's assistance to see if people in the neighborhood north, northeast and northwest of GCR had elevated blood lead levels.

In June and July 1999, consultants for GCR sampled soils in the ditches and neighborhood located between North 66<sup>th</sup> Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue and North 62<sup>nd</sup> Street. This area includes Astoria Mobile Home Park. GCR consultants also sampled soils in residential yards west of North 62<sup>nd</sup> Street. Surface soil lead levels in the ditches range from 60 parts per million (ppm) to 70,000 ppm. The surface soil lead levels in people's yards range from 30 ppm to 1600 ppm. GCR consultants began removal of the contaminated soils in the ditches in June 1999. In March 2000, GCR consultants removed soils from the ditches surrounding the mobile home park and southeast of the mobile home park. Also in March, 2000 they removed contaminated soils from residential yards in Astoria Mobile Home Park. They treated the contaminated soils, as necessary, and sent them to a landfill.

In 1999, the Hillsborough County Health Department (HCHD) and the FDOH offered free blood lead testing to all children younger than 6 years old and pregnant women living near the GCR site. The participants lived within the boundaries of the area north of the railroad, south of E. Broadway, east of N. 62<sup>nd</sup> Street and west of N. 70<sup>th</sup> Street (Attachment 1). Approximately 70 houses are within this area. The FDOH prepared fact sheets describing the upcoming testing and who could participate. The HCHD distributed the flyers one week before the testing date. From August 7, 1999 to August 20, 1999, the HCHD collected blood samples from 16 children younger than six years old to test for lead. No pregnant women participated in the lead blood testing. Each parent signed a consent form accepting responsibility for the testing. On August 7, 1999, the HCHD stationed their mobile health unit at the Astoria Mobile Home Park. The

HCHD staff included an Environmental Specialist, a Biomedical Coordinator who collected blood samples and a Spanish interpreter. A volunteer from the Red Cross also helped with miscellaneous duties during the testing. The Exposure Investigation Coordinator with the FDOH answered questions. Also, from August 10 through August 20, 1999, a senior nurse collected blood samples at the Sulfur Springs Health Clinic. Staff at the FDOH laboratory in Jacksonville analyzed the samples.

In August, 1999 Susan Bland, Bureau of Environmental Epidemiology interpreted the laboratory results. Only two of the children younger than 6 years old had elevated blood lead levels. Those blood lead levels were 11 and 14 micrograms per deciliter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ).

According to the draft 1999 ATSDR Toxicological Profile for Lead, a blood level greater than  $10.0 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  indicates that excessive lead exposure may be occurring.<sup>1</sup> In children, blood lead levels between 10 and  $14 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  should trigger community-wide childhood lead poisoning prevention activities.<sup>1</sup> These activities include education on nutrition, keeping lead dust and soil out of the home, avoiding soils contaminated with lead and washing hands often.

On August 20, 1999, the FDOH mailed certified letters to each parent that had their child or children tested. FDOH included a copy of their laboratory results for their review and suggested that the parents share the results with their child's physician. For those children who had elevated blood lead levels, FDOH recommended the parents visit their child's physician and have their child retested within three months, or follow their physician's orders for retesting. In the letters, FDOH also recommended all children younger than 6 years old have blood lead testing once a year. Also in August, the HCHD and FDOH provided lead poisoning prevention information to the children's parents after notifying them about their results by phone. The HCHD gave lead prevention information to the parents in person and the FDOH mailed information to those who requested additional information.

On August 30, 1999, about 70 residents living near GCR attended an open house at the nearby Kenly Park Recreation Center. The residents had the opportunity to speak with staff from FDOH, HCHD, Hillsborough Environmental Protection Commission (EPC), Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and GCR representatives. Residents received answers to their questions about the blood lead testing and soil cleanup in their neighborhood. During the open house, the HCHD offered to loan a special vacuum cleaner to those who were concerned with lead dust in their homes.

In September 1999 Susan Bland with the FDOH contacted the parents of the two children with elevated blood lead levels to see if the children had been retested and, if so, what the results were. Each family had their child retested at their own physician and informed her that the results were below  $10 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ .

Also in September 1999, Cynthia Keeton with the HCHD contacted one of the parents of the child with elevated blood lead levels. The mother of the child did not originally want the HCHD to test her home for lead. A few weeks later she changed her mind and the HCHD sampled her

home on October 4, 1999 using a XRS machine. They tested the carpets, blinds, plates, children's bedroom and doorways. No lead was detected from any of these areas. Cynthia Keeton discussed preventative measures to keep lead dust from entering her home. She also advised the mother to use an air hepa filter in her home. The mother agreed to help form a parent interest group and speak about lead poisoning to other parents.

On March 16, 2000, Susan Bland called the parents of both families again to follow-up on their child's physician visits and blood lead retesting. The mother from one of the families has three children, two are less than 6 years old. She informed Ms. Bland that these two children visited their physician in September 1999 and their blood lead test results were less than 10 ug/dL. One of her children had an MRI done and the results were normal. Also, in February 2000, both of her youngest children were retested again for lead and the results were again less than 10 ug/dL. The pediatrician will retest them once a year for lead.

On March 16, 2000, Ms. Bland spoke with the father of the other child with elevated blood levels. He said that his child was retested for lead in September 1999, but not since that date. The child's test results from September were normal (<10 ug/dL). The father said they plan to visit the child's physician and retest her again every six months.

Currently, the Hillsborough Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) is monitoring air quality at four stations near the site. The FDEP is monitoring the groundwater quality. The EPA is in the process of remediating the site.

### **Conclusions**

Both children who had elevated blood lead levels in August 1999 were retested for blood lead. Their retesting results were less than 10 ug/dL. Based on these results, it is unlikely that children are currently being exposed to lead contamination from in the area near the Gulf Coast Recycling facility. Based on blood lead sampling results, lead exposure from this site is categorized as a no apparent public health hazard.

### **Recommendations/Public Health Action Plan**

The FDOH does not have any additional recommendations concerning this site, at this time.

### **References**

Toxicological Profile for Lead. Draft dated July, 1999 . Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

**Preparer of the Report**

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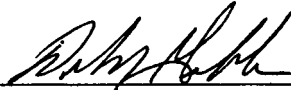
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Division of Health Assessment and Consultation  
Superfund Site Assessment Branch





## CERTIFICATION

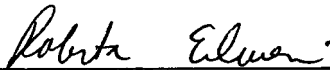
The Gulf Coast Recycling Health Consultation was prepared by the Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Environmental Toxicology, under a cooperative agreement with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. It is in accordance with approved methodology and procedures existing at the time the health consultation was begun.



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The Division of Health Assessment and Consultation, ATSDR, has reviewed this health consultation, and concurs with its findings.



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