

Orica Botany Groundwater Cleanup Project

Community Newsletter

Update from the Community Liaison Committee Meeting

Issue 14
April 2004

This newsletter

This newsletter is distributed throughout the suburbs neighbouring Orica's Botany site to share with the residents the key issues that have been raised at the Community Liaison Committee meetings. Orica prepares it on behalf of the Committee following each meeting.

Community Liaison Committee Meeting

The Committee last met on 9 March 2004 at the Botany Town Hall.

The day began with a tour of the bioremediation field trials at Orica Southlands. Several members of the Committee braved an unusually hot March day (39 degrees) to inspect the site and listen to explanations about how it works from Orica's senior environmental engineer James Stening.



James Stening, environmental engineering specialist from Orica explains the trials to CLC members

Presentations included updates on:

- The EPA's regulation of the contamination by EPA's Niall Johnston;
- Orica's work to clean up the contamination by Bruce Gotting;
- Community relations by Barbara Campany; and
- The Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources' (DIPNR) involvement with the Botany Groundwater Cleanup by Marwan El-Chamy.

EPA's presentation on regulation

EPA's Niall Johnston talked about:

- The First Cleanup Notice issued to Orica in September 2003;
- The Second Cleanup Notice issued to Orica in February 2004;
- Residential bore monitoring carried out by both Orica and the EPA;

- The role played by DIPNR in the Cleanup; and
- Recent reports provided to the EPA by Orica.

With reference to the monitoring of local bores, the EPA's results are largely consistent with Orica's. While contamination has been found at two residences, it may not have originated from Orica. The EPA is therefore investigating with assistance from Botany Council where the contamination may have come from.

Orica's presentation on progress of Cleanup Plan

Bruce Gotting talked about:

- Key dates;
- Groundwater monitoring;
- A new baseline survey of Penrhyn Estuary;
- Orica's monitoring planned for March; and
- Progress on the various projects that make up the Cleanup Plan.

Key dates included:

1/12/03 – Orica began implementation of the Cleanup Plan; and
17/02/04 – EPA issued Orica with a second Cleanup Notice. Orica will need to respond to it by 16/03/04.

Orica has undertaken a Baseline Survey of Penrhyn Estuary to understand the interaction of the groundwater discharging from the Southern Plumes with the surface waters of Penrhyn Estuary. Orica confirmed that volatile chlorinated hydrocarbons (CHCs) decrease by at least a factor of 100 once the groundwater reaches the surface waters of the Estuary. The CHCs are reduced in the intertidal zone due to mixing with sea water during tidal movements. Further sampling will be undertaken in March 2004 to assess whether conditions differ from season to season.

Orica continues to work on the various projects designed to clean up the contaminated groundwater. These include:

Bioremediation Field Trials –
6/2/04 trials began with the injection of potassium oleate & calcium chloride into the aquifer.

Reactive Iron Barrier

Data gaps studies are complete. Groundwater samples will be taken and dispatched to Canada, where they will be tested in the laboratory to assess the effectiveness of different grades of iron.

Hydraulic Containment Design

The preliminary modelling results are expected in mid-March.

Off-site Disposal Trial

Waste Service NSW has agreed to the trial. The installation of a bore to extract the water is complete. Trials are expected to begin in early April.

Recommissioning of the Steam Stripping Unit

This project is now well advanced. The options for disposing of the recovered CHC mixture are currently being investigated.

Transfer of Groundwater to Steam Stripping Unit

The preferred method for transfer of the water is a pipeline. It is currently being designed.

Groundwater Treatment Plant -

Studies are underway. Options for disposal of treated water are being investigated, including re-using the water on site at Botany Industrial Park.

Communication update

Barbara Campany talked about recent and future communication initiatives. Orica has recruited an environment writer to support improved communication efforts. Initiatives include:

- *Development and launch of the Botany Groundwater Website:*
Information on the website will include many of the technical documents Orica has prepared in relation to the groundwater cleanup. It also includes the revised Cleanup Notice issued to Orica in February 2004 from the EPA. Other relevant information will continue to be posted to the website as it becomes available.
- *Availability of technical documents at local libraries*
Recently, Orica placed the Draft Groundwater Cleanup Plan in the local Botany libraries at Pagewood and Mascot.

- *Regular Southern Courier columns*
The idea of introducing a regular column in the newspaper is to provide snapshots to the community relating to the current status of the cleanup. It is also a point of contact where people can refer if they need to get more information.

Other useful tools being developed include:

- *Community information packs;*
- *Fact sheets; and*
- *Frequently asked questions.*

Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR) update

Marwan El-Chamy, Manager Resource Access, provided an update for CLC members stating that DIPNR is working to improve inter-agency responses to issues like the Botany Groundwater contamination. They aim to improve communication between themselves, DEC, NSW Health and local government.

Currently they are trying to identify those bores in the community that may still be unregistered. Residents in the community are encouraged to register their bore with DIPNR so that communication about groundwater issues can be more effective.

If you have a bore that needs to be registered, please call Dan McKibbin at DIPNR on 9895 7875. Registration of bores is free of charge and carries no penalty.

The next Community Liaison Committee meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 2nd June 2004 at the Botany Town Hall.

Contact Orica

Orica is committed to communicating with the local people. If you have any comments, on how Orica can improve communication, or any queries about the project, please do not hesitate to contact Orica by:

- Calling the community hotline on 1800 025 138,
- Emailing Orica's Site Environment Manager Bruce Gotting on bruce.gotting@orica.com,
- Writing to:
Community Matters
Orica Australia Limited
16-20 Beauchamp Road
MATRAVILLE 2036, or
- Visiting Orica's new website: www.oricabotanygroundwater.com