

## **First Quarter 2008**

As part of the additional soil sampling to confirm the Study Area, Exide sampled approximately 100 properties in 2007. Exide will complete the soil sampling of the remaining 25 properties later this spring. The latest soil sampling efforts will be used to finalize the Study Area.

Currently, Exide is analyzing the collected soil samples. The soil results will be mailed to the respective property owners in the spring with an attached EPA determination letter. Residential properties with an average soil lead level above 650 mg/kg will require soil cleanup. Residential properties with an average soil lead level of 650 mg/kg or less do not pose a human health risk and will not require soil cleanup.

The first phase of the residential cleanup is scheduled to begin early June 2008. Exide is currently conducting a census in the community to determine residences with children seven years old and younger. The residential cleanups will be prioritized based on the census. Properties where children seven years old and younger reside are scheduled to be cleaned up first. Prior to the implementation of the soil cleanup Exide will develop a specific remediation plan that will address the layout and condition for each property. In the coming weeks, Exide and EPA will conduct a survey and assessment of the properties to be cleaned up. The information from the survey will be incorporated into the specific remediation plan for each property. Exide will work with the property owners to insure that the cleanups meet the owners' satisfaction. The first phase of the residential cleanups will consist of approximately 50 residential properties.

EPA has received Exide's Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessment Reports for Bernhart Park. EPA and PADEP are currently reviewing the reports. EPA and PADEP will complete the review of the reports by early March. Prior to EPA's final approval, EPA will discuss the findings of the risk assessment reports with the City of Reading. Because of the change in ownership from Omega Laboratories to Quest Diagnostics, Exide is in the processing of completing the necessary administrative logistics to restart the free blood lead testing program. Exide anticipates that the program will restart in early March. EPA will update the website when the free blood lead testing program is available.

## **Second Quarter 2008**

Exide completed soil sampling of the majority of the remaining properties during the first quarter of 2008. The updated [Exide Study Area](#) reflects the results of these properties and confirms the extent of the lead contamination. There remain a handful of properties that have yet to have their soil samples analyzed. When the soil results for these properties become available, the Study Area will be updated to reflect the results.

To date, Exide has sampled about 600 properties, which is approximately 99% of the total sampling area. There are about 10 remaining properties that have yet to be sampled

because of inaccessibility issues. Exide will continue its effort to sample these remaining properties. Out of the 600 sampled properties, 425 properties have a soil lead average of 650 mg/kg or less. The owners of these properties have received a determination letter from EPA that states that soil lead levels detected on their properties do not pose a health risk and therefore, their properties do not require soil cleanup.

An estimated 130 to 150 additional residential properties will require soil cleanup. Presently, Exide has cleaned up 75 residential properties that contain an average soil lead level greater than 1200 mg/kg. In the upcoming weeks EPA will issue determination letters to the property owners that will require soil cleanup.

Exide will clean up approximately 50 residential properties in 2008. These properties will be contacted by EPA or Exide. Those properties that are not scheduled to be cleaned up in 2008 will be cleaned up in the subsequent years. The schedule for the residential cleanups are prioritized based upon children 7 years old and younger residing on the properties. The children in this age group are more susceptible to lead exposures. If there are no young children residing on the property, soil cleanup of the property will probably not occur in 2008. In the first quarter of 2008, Exide conducted a home survey to determine properties where young children reside. Based on the home survey, Exide will submit to EPA a list of 50 residential properties that will require soil cleanup in 2008. The residential cleanup of the initial 50 residential properties will begin in July 2008 and will be completed by October 2008.

Prior to the implementation of the soil cleanup Exide will develop a specific remediation plan that will address the layout and condition for each property. Exide and EPA will conduct a site visit to survey and assess the properties to be cleaned up. The information from the survey will be incorporated into the specific remediation plan for each property. Exide will work with the property owners to insure that the cleanups meet the owners' satisfaction.

EPA anticipates that Exide will complete all the residential cleanups by 2010 or possibly sooner. If the property owner is uncertain of his/her property status or the scheduling of the cleanups, please contact Khai M. Dao, the EPA Project Manager, at 1 (800) 3521973, ext. 45467.

The [Final Draft Human Health Risk Assessment for the Northwest Portion of Bernhart Park Report](#) was made available in March 2008. EPA has received preliminary comments from Berks County. The Final Draft Ecological Risk Assessment Report for Bernhart Park is ongoing. When the Final Draft Ecological Risk Assessment Report is complete EPA will make this document available to the public. Prior to EPA's final approval, EPA will discuss the findings of the risk assessment reports and an appropriate cleanup approach to Bernhart Park with the City of Reading.

Because of privacy issues (i.e., personal medical information) the restart of the free blood lead testing program has been delayed. Presently, Exide is finalizing the contract with

Quest Diagnostics. EPA will update the website when the free blood lead testing program is available.

### **Third Quarter 2008**

The soil sampling within the Exide Study Area is near completion. Out of 600 plus properties, there are only ten properties remain that require sampling or re-sampling. Nine of the ten are scheduled to be sampled this fall. The lone remaining property has yet to consent to the soil sampling. EPA and Exide are working with Muhlenberg Township officials to encourage the homeowner of this property to agree to the soil sampling. The majority of the homeowners have received their soil results with an EPA determination letter. Properties with an average soil lead level below 650 mg/kg do not pose a health risk and will not require cleanup. Those properties that have an average soil lead level above 650 mg/kg have received a letter from EPA that informed the property owners that their property will require soil cleanup. Properties with children seven years old and younger are scheduled to be cleaned up this fall. Those properties that are not scheduled to be cleaned up in 2008 will be cleaned up in the subsequent years. EPA anticipates that Exide will complete all the residential cleanups by 2010 or possibly sooner. If the property owner is uncertain of his/her property status or the scheduling of the cleanups, please contact Khai M. Dao, the EPA Project Manager, at 1 (800) 3521973, ext. 45467.

Based on the home survey, there are 40 properties that have young children and an average soil lead level above 650 mg/kg. These properties will be cleaned up in 2008. Exide has started the residential cleanups in late August. The cleanups are expected to be completed by the end of October. The cleanups consist of soil excavation, backfilling with clean soil and restoring the property to its original condition. Exide and its contactors will work with the property owners to insure that the cleanups meet the owners' satisfaction.

The free blood lead testing program is now available to residents who reside in Laureldale Borough and Muhlenberg Township. The free service is offered at Quests Diagnostics located at the Fairgrounds Square Mall. Additional information about the program and how to receive the free testing is available at:

<http://www.epa.gov/reg3wcmd/ca/pdf/ExideTechnologiesCommunityBloodLeadTestingProgram.pdf>

In June 2008, the City of Reading submitted an official request to the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to review the [Final Draft Human Health Risk Assessment for the Northwest Portion of Bernhart Park Report](#). The PADOH and ATSDR are currently reviewing the report.