
Park Cleanup and Neighborhood Sampling Resumes this Spring

W.C. Reed Playfields

Cleveland, Ohio

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For more information

For questions, comments or more information about the cleanup at the W.C. Reed Playfields, you can contact these U.S. EPA team members:

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www.epa.gov/region5/cleanup/wcreed/index.html

In the past year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has been working to clean up the W.C. Reed Playfields. The playfields is a 12-acre Cleveland city park located in a residential area at the intersection of West 15th Street and Denison Avenue. The city closed the park in December 2012 after soil tests found high levels of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, or PAHs in surface soils. PAHs are a group of chemicals that originate from coal, crude oil or gasoline.

As the cleanup has proceeded, adjacent property owners and other interested people have raised important questions concerning the contamination, the effect of pollution on adjacent land, tree removal and the planned remedial methods. This fact sheet has been prepared to provide an update on the status of the cleanup and actions planned this spring and summer.

What is the status of the playfields cleanup?

In late May 2014, the U.S. EPA started work to clean up the playfields. The cleanup involves leaving most of the PAH-contaminated soil where it is and covering the park with clean soil. This soil cap consists of 18 inches of clean fill material and 6 inches of topsoil. The cap will keep people from coming in contact with any pollutants and allow for safe recreational use. Cleanup actions to-date include:

- Removal of the existing concrete sidewalks, asphalt basketball courts and half of the tennis courts. Two remaining tennis courts will be converted into a raised bed community garden. The 1,469 tons of asphalt and concrete removed from the playfields were sent to a



U.S. EPA installed an underground stormwater retention basin in the northeast corner of the playfields to handle runoff.

recycling facility. All but four oak trees were removed to allow for the construction of the soil cover.

- Preservation of the four mature oak trees in the midsection of the park. This involved removal of PAH-contaminated soil in a non-destructive manner around the root area of the oak trees and installing a tree well and drainage system around each tree. This work was done as a result of listening to the concerns of residents and the city.
- Limited excavation of PAH-contaminated soil to allow for installation of perimeter drainage swales to meet final grade requirements and allow for planned playfields improvements. All of the excavated soil was transferred to the northeast corner of the park for use as sub-base fill and will be covered with the soil cap. To date, no PAH-contaminated soil has been taken off the playfields site for disposal.
- More than 47,000 cubic yards of fill material and topsoil were delivered to the playfields for construction of the soil cap. About 90 percent of the soil cover cap has been completed.
- Upgrading the park's stormwater drainage system and building swales around the perimeter to protect neighboring properties from runoff.
- Installing utility conduit for future park lighting, putting in gravel sub-base for future basketball courts and reseeding completed portions of the soil cover.

U.S. EPA has completed about 80 percent of the planned cleanup tasks on the playfields. Due to a wetter-than-normal 2014 construction season and adjustments in the playfields design, the federal Agency was unable to complete all of the work. This year U.S. EPA will relocate PAH-contaminated soil from a portion of the affected adjacent properties to the northeast corner of the playfields. This will allow for a savings in disposal costs and help minimize truck traffic on residential streets.

The park has been secured for public safety, and temporary cover material has been placed over all PAH-tainted soil so U.S. EPA can resume cleanup activities this spring. The federal Agency and its contractors will be monitoring conditions at the playfields during the winter months.

Please note during this time of inactivity you will notice some ponding of water in a low area where the proposed baseball field will be located. This low spot is because the city of Cleveland will be installing an



The cleanup process caused the removal of most trees in the park. A local group worked with U.S. EPA to save four mature oak trees on the site. Workers carefully removed pollution around the roots and installed a special drainage system under each tree.

underground drainage system and backfilling this area with a soil specific for use in a baseball infield.

Some small wet spots or ponds may form this winter and spring as the new fill dirt settles in the park, but U.S. EPA will work on those problem areas before finishing the project.

The soil mound that can be seen at the southeast corner of the playfields is clean backfill material that will be used for the remaining portion of the soil cap. Also be aware after a rainfall you will observe water in the perimeter swales. These swales have been designed to hold and direct water to nearby stormwater catch basins, thus preventing runoff to neighboring properties. Normally, any standing water will no longer be observable within a couple of days of a rain. As part of future playfields improvements, wetlands vegetation will be considered for planting in the swales to absorb standing water.

Remaining cleanup tasks

U.S. EPA plans to complete the cleanup of the playfields this year. In addition, the federal Agency will also start cleanup work involving adjacent properties. To date, U.S. EPA has obtained access to and has sampled 49 parcels to determine if they have been adversely affected by PAH contamination.

The sample results showed 32 of these lots will require cleanup. U.S. EPA will be working with the property owners to schedule the cleanup work during the 2015 construction season. The remaining remedial tasks include the following:

- Transfer PAH-contaminated soil from some of the affected neighbors to the northeast corner of the playfields to allow the parkland to reach final grade requirements.
- Excavate PAH-contaminated soil from the southeast corner of the playfields (near the West 15th Street and Denison Avenue intersection), where the proposed parking lot will be located. U.S. EPA will then install gravel sub-base material in this area in preparation for final asphalt paving by the city.
- Complete installation of the soil cap over the remaining portion of the playfields.
- Install new fencing between the park and adjacent property owners.
- Complete reseeded of remaining portions of the park.
- Attempt to gain permission from the owners of the remaining 20 parcels targeted for sampling. Once permission is granted, the U.S. EPA will sample the properties for PAHs.
- Complete removal actions on the affected neighboring parcels.

Thank you community

The U.S. EPA will return management of the W.C. Reed Playfields to the city once cleanup tasks are completed later this year. The city of Cleveland will be responsible for the installation of the final park improvements. These steps include construction of the baseball infield, basketball court, youth playground, sidewalks, tree planting and parking lot paving. U.S. EPA expects to conduct cleanup activities relating to the adjacent properties throughout the 2015 construction season.

The U.S. EPA responders would like to thank the W.C. Reed Playfields users and neighbors for their patience and understanding during this disruptive pollution incident and subsequent cleanup.

Again, U.S. EPA staffers will be contacting those residents who have not yet turned in permission agreements for us to sample their yards. Once you have received this information, we ask that you complete and return it to us as soon as possible so you are not left out of this cleanup effort. There is no charge for the sampling or potential cleanup work.



U.S. EPA has completed about 80 percent of the planned cleanup tasks on the W.C. Reed Playfields. The remainder of the work and sampling and cleanup of neighboring yards should be finished this year.

Park Cleanup Should Finish this Year

Yard Sampling Continues

W.C. Reed Playfields
Cleveland, Ohio

(details inside)

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W.C. Reed Playfields: Completion of Park Cleanup Eyed Later this Year

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