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(New York, N.Y.) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency today finalized a plan to clean up ground water at the Peninsula Boulevard Ground Water Plume Superfund site in Hempstead, N.Y. by removing and treating contaminated ground water from the site. The ground water is contaminated with the volatile organic compounds tetrachloroethylene and trichloroethylene, chemicals used in dry cleaning that can seriously impact people's health. EPA's cleanup plan entails extracting ground water from the site using pumping wells and treating the water to remove the contaminants before it is disposed of at a public wastewater treatment facility or sent back into surface or ground water. Earlier this year, EPA held a public meeting and encouraged the public to comment on the four options the Agency developed to address the contaminated ground water.

"Volatile organic compounds can pose serious health risks - especially in drinking water - and EPA's plan to remove them from ground water at the Peninsula Boulevard site is the best way to protect the health of people who live and work in the area," said EPA Regional Administrator Judith A. Duck. "After considering public comments, EPA has selected a final cleanup plan for the Peninsula Boulevard site that provides a clear course of action for protecting the environment in Hempstead."

Volatile organic compounds can easily evaporate into the air and many are known or suspected to cause cancer. The extent and nature of the health impacts depend on many factors, including the level and length of exposure.

Residents in the area get their drinking water from the Long Island American Water Company, which operates a drinking water well field approximately 2,000 feet north of the Peninsula Boulevard site. Water extracted from this well field is treated to remove contaminants before distribution and is sometimes mixed with water from other sources. EPA did not detect any contaminants above acceptable levels in ground water from the Long Island American Water Company during its investigation of the Peninsula Boulevard Superfund site.

The Peninsula Boulevard site sits adjacent to a number of commercial and residential properties, with the Woodmere Middle School located at the western site boundary. A series of investigations in the 1990s, performed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation at the site of the former Grove Cleaners, revealed an extensive ground water contaminant plume extending both to the north and the south of Peninsula Boulevard.

The site was added to the Superfund list of the most contaminated hazardous waste sites in 2004. EPA conducted an investigation at the site from 2005 to 2010, and identified ground water contaminated with tetrachloroethylene and low levels of other volatile organic compounds. Information obtained from the Long Island American Water Company and from EPA sampling indicates that one of the company's well fields may have been impacted by the contamination from the Peninsula Boulevard site. A treatment system was installed at this well field in 1990 to ensure any contaminants reaching the well field are removed.

For more information on the Peninsula Boulevard Superfund site, visit <http://www.epa.gov/region02/superfund/npl/peninsulablvd/index.html> [1]

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