

Midlothian Petition Community Site Update December 2005

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), in cooperation with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), continue to make progress in the evaluation of historical air emissions data gathered in Midlothian.

During the month of December DSHS staff members canvassed neighborhoods in order to visit with and gather information from residents in various locations of Midlothian. This gave citizens an opportunity to let DSHS staff know what their concerns were and gave DSHS staff an opportunity to explain the health consultation process.

DSHS staff randomly selected homes in five separate neighborhoods: Overlook Estates, Cement Valley, neighborhood near high school, subdivision North of Pecan Acres, and homes located northeast of Shiloh Road. Residents were asked questions regarding health concerns, their impression of the air quality, what methods should the department use to contact citizens, and unusual problems with pets or livestock. For those homes where no one was available, flyers were left on doors and mailboxes. Information gathered during these visits by department staff will remain confidential.

**We found that some citizens were under the impression that this survey was or would be used as a study. This is not true. The information that staff obtained was simply a way to gather as much information as possible from a diverse group of people.*

Next Steps

As the work has progressed, community members have asked a number of health and policy related questions regarding what the next steps will be. Once the health consultation has been completed and reviewed by ATSDR it will be released for public comment. The documents expected release date is the first part of February 2006. When the document is released for public comment, community members will have 30 days to submit any comments or concerns about the document to DSHS staff. Comments must be submitted in writing either by US Mail or email postmarked before the end of the comment period in order to be addressed in the document. In addition, during the comment period DSHS will hold a public meeting in order to give community members the opportunity to ask questions or voice concerns regarding the department's findings and recommendations.