



U.S. General Services Administration



Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

Environmental Cleanup Work at the Southwest Landfill on the DFC

What caused the environmental issues on the Denver Federal Center?

During World War II the Denver Federal Center (DFC) was the site of the Denver Ordnance Plant, which produced small munitions, such as rifle cartridges and small artillery. Since World War II the DFC has been used by over 28 different federal agencies for administrative offices, research, and laboratories. It has also been used for some unusual research, including: testing herbicides and pesticides on crops, and research on diseases in large and small animals.

Due to the variety of these historical activities at the DFC and its long history, the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is required by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to investigate and clean up environmental contamination at the DFC. Environmental investigations and cleanup of the DFC are being conducted by the GSA in compliance with state of Colorado regulations and requirements. Major investigations and cleanups on the site have been completed or are underway. The southwest corner of the DFC is one of these major projects. The area is variously referred to as the "Southwest Landfill," "the Hospital Phase II Area," or "Parcel C."

What types of activities have taken place in the Southwest Landfill area?

Over the years following the closure of the Denver Ordnance Plant, GSA and other agencies disposed of miscellaneous wastes, including building and road demolition debris, in the far southwest corner of the DFC, at West Alameda just east of South Union Boulevard. As a consequence, the state health department considers this area a landfill, and one of the areas on the DFC subject to environmental cleanup.

In September 2007, GSA sold approximately 65 acres of land for the construction of the Regional Transportation District (RTD) light rail intermodal station and the relocation of St. Anthony Central Hospital. The majority of this land, commonly referred to as "Parcel A" and "Parcel B," respectively, was investigated and cleaned up by GSA prior to the sale. The remaining land is the subject "Parcel C," or the "Southwest Landfill Area," which must be cleaned prior to the transfer of title from GSA. This land is being purchased by St. Anthony Hospital primarily for future expansion and will not be fully developed at this time.

What has been found in the Southwest Landfill?

The area was initially investigated in 2005-2007. Low levels of common chemicals were found in the waste, soil, ground water and surface water. Asbestos-containing materials were also found.

What type of cleanup work and construction will be done in the Southwest Landfill?

To prevent any of the disposed wastes from migrating to groundwater, surface water, or air, some waste will be excavated and an engineered soil cover, often referred to as a landfill cap, will be installed in the winter of 2008. This is the proposed cleanup strategy for the landfill, as documented in the "Corrective Measures Work Plan."

In addition to the landfill cap, construction on “Parcel C” within the next 24 months will also include: 1) Routh Street, connecting the hospital to West Alameda Avenue; 2) an improved McIntyre Gulch, recontoured and landscaped; and 3) a parking lot at the far north end for overflow hospital parking. All this activity is necessary to support the main development of the Hospital on “Parcel B.”

How will all of this work be regulated?

Waste removal and construction of the landfill cap will be conducted in strict accordance with plans approved by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Earthmoving equipment will be active from approximately mid-July 2008 through May 2009. Strict dust control will be in place during the waste removal and landfill recontouring to reduce the potential for generating dust that might carry landfill contaminants, such as asbestos. To ensure the public’s safety, air monitoring will be conducted by the contractor during this period. Monitoring equipment will be placed on workers performing construction activities to help protect worker safety, and assist in quick detection of any fugitive dust problems. Should fugitive dust issues be detected, soil disturbing work will stop immediately until appropriate changes are made to work practices. Less stringent, but regulated, dust control will be instituted during the remainder of the construction period.

Your health and safety are top priorities to GSA and the state health department. Therefore, the cleanup areas of the Southwest Landfill are closed to public access. These areas are currently posted with “Do Not Enter” signs.

Who can I contact with questions or concerns?

Mr. John Kleinschmidt, GSA DFC Environmental Manager, 303-236-8000 ext. 5030

Ms. Jeannine Natterman, Public Information Officer, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, 303-692-3303

Where can I find additional information on all of the development activities on the DFC?

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DFC Master Site Plan and EIS:

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