



Your Environment

A collaborative information resource for the Muskegon County Community

Spring 2013

Sludge. Not pretty. But the presentation at the MCECC quarterly meeting on March 12 about sludge was very informative. Sara Pearson, Geologist for the MDEQ Remediation and Redevelopment Division discussed the Zephyr site investigation and status, including the history and progress of the contaminated Holton Road site. Located east of Hwy 31, by the Marathon Terminal, the site is currently privately owned, with an active fertilizer business, as well as a large parcel of vacant land; some of the land, adjacent to Holton Road, is now municipal property. The municipalities, as well as the land owner of the vacant land, are looking for the green-light for redevelopment, and some of the land has received a conditional thumbs-up by the MDEQ for redevelopment. Ducks Unlimited group is planning to protect some of the vacant land as a wildlife habitat. A nice example of how business development and environmental protection are trying to work together in Muskegon.

Back to the sludge; past business practices of crude oil refinement adversely impacted the wetlands, sand dunes, organic soil layers, and ground water table. Beginning in 1931, Zephyr Oil contamination of the site continued into the 80's. In the 40's Zephyr installed 2 recovery trenches at the bluff to capture released oil; the trenches are still being used today in the remediation and clean-up efforts. Zephyr filed for bankruptcy and closed in the 90's and the state of Michigan became responsible for the clean-up. This site is part of the Muskegon Lake Area of Concern, as designated by the Federal Environmental Protection Act, and the EPA and Army Corp of Engineers, as well as the Muskegon Lake Watershed and MDEQ and others have partnered to remediate the toxic remnants of the refinery, which includes high metal concentrations and polluted ground water. In June 2013, the EPA will arrive for further sampling. Redevelopment is the driving force, and part of the site has been determined to be manageable, and is permitted to move forward with economic development. The remainder of the site needs continued remediation. We have high hopes that the Great Lakes Legacy Act will fund the remaining work which needs to be done. Until it is complete, Muskegon Lake can not be de-listed as an Area of Concern, and the land can not be safely redeveloped.

Good Websites Good Information

EPA CARE Program
www.epa.gov/care

EPA Lead Safety
www.epa.gov/lead

E-Waste Recycling
www.reconnectpartnership.com

County-wide Health Concerns
www.muskegonhealth.net

Link from National Wildlife
Federation

GARDENER'S GUIDE TO
GLOBAL WARMING

Challenges and Solutions:
[www.nwf.org/gardenersguide/
Gardeners_Guide.pdf](http://www.nwf.org/gardenersguide/Gardeners_Guide.pdf)