

JOINT RELEASE:
Greenwich Board of Education * Town of Greenwich * GHS-MISA Building Committee
Greenwich, CT

Thursday, August 25, 2011

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GREENWICH HIGH SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTAL TESTING UPDATE

GHS Field #1/Cardinal Stadium is Open for Practice
All Other GHS Fields Remain Closed Until Further Notice
Middle Schools' Interscholastic Sports Program Will Be Delayed
GHS Parking is Restricted to STAFF ONLY, No Student Parking
Environmental Evaluation Continues, Interim Remediation Plans in Development
Community Update and Open House Scheduled for September 7, 2011

General Note: It is understood that members of the community are anxious for information regarding the use of the fields and the student parking at Greenwich High School as well as the results of the environmental testing. Please be assured that the many agencies, departments and organizations involved are working at an expedited rate in order to assess the situation, and to plan for and conduct interim remediation efforts with a focus on opening fields as soon as possible to accommodate Fall sports and to minimize the disruption that a contingency plan will have on other fields in the community. Rumors about the status of the fields persist. We encourage the community to rely on these written updates from the Town/Schools/Building Committee and written correspondence from your coaches and/or Principals regarding the details of your program. Please check emails and the District/High School Web Site regularly for these updates. In general, the organizations involved are working until the last minute to open a field, as in the case of Cardinal Stadium, and so there is little opportunity for advanced notice. As soon as information has been confirmed and final decisions have been made concerning any aspect of this situation it will be communicated as quickly as possible. The community's cooperation and patience as we navigate this very complex situation is appreciated.

Environmental Testing/Remediation:

The environmental evaluation at Greenwich High School is ongoing. Over 300 soil samples have been taken to date. Early analysis reflects levels of PCBs from 'non-detected' to various levels in defined areas above the applicable cleanup standards. The Environmental Consultant (DTC) is developing an interim remediation plan in order to address the areas where contaminants were detected above the standards in order to open more of the fields. The applicable Federal and State cleanup standards for PCBs in soil is 1 milligram/kilogram (mg/kg). The attached figure depicts the PCB results obtained to date for shallow soil across the athletic fields. Other contaminants including arsenic and chlordane were detected at concentrations exceeding their respective cleanup standards in localized areas within the fields.

GHS West Parking Lot: The removal of the contaminated piles of dirt in the west (back) parking lot and the restoration of that lot for use will take at least 3-4 weeks. The investigation, removal and remediation of the contaminated soil is overseen by Federal, State and Local environmental and health officials, as well as two entities separate from the contractor licensed to remove the contaminated soil and remediate the site. There will be ongoing air-monitoring to ensure the safety of all students, staff and workers during the soil removal process.

Health & Safety:

The Connecticut and Greenwich Departments of Health have provided information on PCB's in the documents attached and posted to the web site. Exposure to the risks of PCB's result from direct contact, inhalation, and/or ingestion. The District, Town and Building Committee are working closely with State and Federal Environmental and Health agencies/departments in order to minimize possible exposure. Air-monitoring has been ongoing both within and outside of the building and will continue during the soil removal process. Thus far air monitoring has not detected any

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levels of PCB's above standards. Fields and Parking lots will not be re-opened without the approval of the Local, State and Federal agencies involved.

The information that we have received to date tells us that no PCB's have been detected in the ambient air, so exposure would be limited to contact with contaminated soil. While testing is still ongoing, we have been able to determine that most of the PCB's have been detected either in deep soil borings, or in localized shallower areas around the fields. The majority of the fields and parking lots have shown PCB's are at acceptable levels. The Town/District has worked closely with State and Federal environmental and health officials who have approved opening fields as soil sample results are received and interim remedial measures are implemented to remove defined areas of PCB contaminated soil.

Parking/Traffic/Busing:

Parking at Greenwich High School is restricted to **staff only** for the start of school due to the removal of the contaminated piles of dirt in the west (back) parking lot and the restoration of that lot for use. It is estimated that this process will take at least 3-4 weeks. **Therefore, student parking will not be permitted until further notice.** Plans have been developed to ensure bus capacity and to enhance traffic control measures. If eligible for transportation, please encourage students to take the bus in order to avoid a back up in drop off and pick up lines. If you must drive your children to school, please allow extra time. The start of the school day will NOT be delayed because of traffic. Please note that parking on private property without permission will result in ticketing and/or towing. Parking on Hillside Road along the school property is permitted parking only and is restricted for staff.

Fields/Athletics:

Greenwich High School

Field #1 or Cardinal Stadium has been re-opened for practice. The Environmental Consultants, Local, State and Federal Agencies are working tirelessly in order to assess the situation, plan for and implement interim remediation efforts in order to properly address the areas of the fields that have been identified with PCB levels higher than the cleanup standard. The goal is to address fields 3, 4, 6 & 7 in the immediate short-term in order to ready them for the fall sports program. For the start of the season, practices and tryouts will be held at the Cardinal Stadium, middle schools, Julian Curtiss School, and/or Greenwich Country Day School fields. See attached notice from the GHS Athletic Department for details. This information will also be available on the District and high school web sites. Coaches will communicate additional specifics directly to their teams as necessary.

Central, Eastern & Western Middle Schools:

The fall interscholastic middle school program will be delayed in order to cooperate with and accommodate the high school's interscholastic athletic program. The high school teams will be using the middle school fields for practice after school until such time as the high school fields can be readied for use and re-opened. The goal is to have the fields open at the high school by mid to late September.

School Operations - Start of School: At this time, school will open for students as scheduled.

MISA Building Committee: The Greenwich High School Music Instructional Space and Auditorium (GHS-MISA) project is moving ahead as scheduled. The North and South parking lots will be completed before the start of school.

Communications:

* Updates are posted to the **District and Greenwich High School Web Sites** as new information becomes available: www.greenwichschools.org - click on "Updates on Environmental Testing at GHS".

* **ParentLink/Email Communications** are sent directly to GPS/GHS families as updates are released and new information is available.

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* The Board of Education will receive an update on the MISA project and a status update on the Environmental Evaluation at its **August 25, 2011 meeting**, 7:00 PM at the Town Hall Meeting Room.

* The next regularly scheduled GHS-MISA **Building Committee meeting is September 6, 2011**, 7:30 AM, Havemeyer Building.

* The District will host a **Open House on September 7, 2011**, 7:00 PM-9:00 PM at Greenwich High School in order to provide an opportunity for high school families, neighbors, and the broader community to receive an overview of the situation and to ask questions of the various departments and agencies involved.

***Background:** In mid July 2011, during the course of the excavation work for the Greenwich High School Music Instructional Space and Auditorium (MISA) project, unexpected soil conditions were discovered in the West (or back) parking lot, adjacent to the fields, which prompted immediate environmental testing. The site work in the west lot was stopped and the excavation area was contained. The initial tests indicated the presence of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and petroleum hydrocarbons at concentrations above acceptable standards for residential and commercial use, as determined by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), in deep soil in the excavation. A second round of samples was taken on July 20th and included soil and indoor and outdoor air testing. The results of the air quality tests indicate all selected factors were within acceptable levels. The results of the second round of soil samples confirmed the previous results, which showed concentrations of PCBs above the residential cleanup standard along with low levels of some metals. On July 29, 2011 the results of a third set of shallow soil samples taken closer to fields 3 and 4, reflected PCBs levels that are above acceptable standards for residential or commercial use. These results prompted the closure of all fields as a precaution until a more comprehensive understanding of the extent of the issue could be determined. The Greenwich Public Schools/Board of Education, the Town of Greenwich and the GHS MISA Building Committee are working in collaboration to address the environmental concerns of the fields at Greenwich High School. Licensed Environmental Professionals have been contracted to plan for and conduct more comprehensive testing. The Town, State Departments of Health and Environmental Protection, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have also been consulted.*