

# Former Ronson Metals Site

Fact Sheet

Manufacturers Place, Newark City, Essex County

July 2017

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) is conducting indoor air sampling at homes and businesses in the Manufacturers Place area. This fact sheet is designed to provide updated information about the indoor air sampling and the remedial investigation associated with the former Ronson Metals Site.

*Se necessita ajuda a traduzir esta informacao por favor contacte o escritorio de Eliana Pintor Marin, atraves do telefone 973-589-0713*

## Site Remediation and Waste Management Program

### Office of Community Relations

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## Background

The Former Ronson Metals Corporation manufactured cigarette lighters and other related products. In 1989, the company closed its Newark facility on Manufacturers Place. About one dozen areas of soil contamination, as well as ground water contamination were identified. The contaminants of concern include various volatile organic compounds (VOCs) including trichloroethene (TCE), which is the primary contaminant of concern. For historical site information, please see the [December 2015 Former Ronson Metals Site Fact Sheet \(pdf\)](#). Starting in 1999, ownership of the property transferred, and eventually 19 homes and 5 commercial/industrial buildings were built on the Former Ronson Metals site.

In late 2012, NJDEP began a vapor intrusion investigation of the site. Vapor intrusion occurs when vapors from chemical compounds in the subsurface soil or ground water seep through openings in building slabs, affecting the quality of the air inside a building. NJDEP has sampled 66 properties as part of the vapor intrusion investigation. Sub-slab depressurization systems were installed in 28 properties to address elevated TCE concentrations. These systems are working properly by preventing vapors from entering the overlying structures. The system, similar to a radon system, creates a vacuum beneath the slabs of buildings and ventilates the TCE vapors to the outdoor air at the roof line, making these buildings safe to occupy.

NJDEP contracted with H2M Architects & Engineers (H2M) to conduct a Remedial Investigation (RI) of the ground water contamination. In August 2015, H2M initiated the Phase 1 of field investigations which focused on characterizing the extent of contamination in shallow ground water near the impacted residential properties. (please see: [H2M Presentation Former Ronson Metals Site \[pdf\]](#) for more information about the field

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investigation). The results of the Phase 1 fieldwork were evaluated and it was determined that the concentrations of VOCs in shallow ground water do not appear to be the source of the contaminated indoor air in the overlying structures. Under the direction of NJDEP, H2M initiated Phase 2 of the investigation which focused on collecting soil samples from the front and back yards of the residential properties located on the former Ronson building site to determine if the soil is the source of the TCE vapors.

## Current and Future Activities:

NJDEP initiated Phase 2 of the RI in 2016 with the following objectives:

- Collect samples of soil and clay cap at residential properties to evaluate whether soil contamination is the source of the TCE detected in indoor air.
- Confirm the presence and assess the condition of the clay cap. (NOTE: The clay cap was installed by Ronson as part of their previous remedial work to prevent direct contact exposure of future land users to historic fill contaminants that were left in place on the properties.)
- Collect shallow ground water samples from seven of the residential properties on the Former Ronson Metals site to evaluate whether shallow ground water contamination is the source of the TCE detected in indoor air.

Soils and ground water samples were collected from the yards of 17 residences that

were built on the former Ronson Metals facility.

The results of the Phase 2 RI are as follows:

- The concentrations of VOCs in the soil do not appear to be the source of the contaminated indoor air found in the overlying structures.
- Soil sampling confirmed the presence of historic fill contaminants which are often detected in urban settings. The presence of the clay cap was confirmed in most of the backyards of the sampled yards. In addition to the clay cap, asphalt is covering the majority of the yards and is acting as a cap to prevent direct exposure to soil contaminants, and these areas should remain paved. Each homeowner will receive the results of all soil and ground water samples collected in their individual yards.
- Ground water contamination for VOCs was found to be the greatest in one deeper monitoring well sample located away from the homes, towards Ferry Street. However, the shallow ground water in the yards of the impacted homes did not reveal significantly elevated TCE concentrations that would act as a source to the indoor air contamination, confirming NJDEP's Phase 1 conclusions. Shallow ground water flow is from the West (off-site) and flowing East towards the homes.

**Phase 3** activities will focus on sampling of soil and ground water at the

commercial/warehouse properties on Manufacturers Place. Based on the review and evaluation of Phase 1 and Phase 2 investigation results, NJDEP believes that the soils and shallow ground water beneath the warehouse properties on Manufacturers Place may be acting as the primary source of the TCE vapors impacting the homes.

The report detailing the findings during Phase 2 will be finalized by late summer, and the results for each individual property will be sent to the homeowners.



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**For additional information on this investigation, please contact:**

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