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NEWS

Neighborhood group calls for more area testing after lead is found at former Shingle Mountain site

Residents hope the site becomes a neighborhood park after remediation takes place.



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By [Sophie Austin](#)
7:13 PM on Aug 2, 2021

A southern Dallas neighborhood group is calling for more contaminant testing around the former site of 100,000 tons of discarded roofing materials known as Shingle Mountain after an environmental assessment found lead levels in the soil three times the minimum required for a cleanup, per state residential standards.

Modern Geosciences, an environmental services organization investigating the former Blue Star Recycling site for the city, found lead levels higher than residential cleanup standards of 500 parts per million set by state guidelines in four soil samples, according to a June 7 report. The organization found levels as high as 1,450 parts per million in the former Shingle Mountain site soil.

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Amber Wang, a board member for Downwinders at Risk, held a sign reading "property city of Dallas" outside Shingle Mountain after a giant countdown cleanup calendar was installed last year. (Ben Torres / Special Contributor)

Genaro Viniegra Jr., co-chair of Neighbors United, an association for the Floral Farms neighborhood in southern Dallas, said he was shocked by how high the levels of lead were in the soil samples. He's concerned about what that means for the households near the site.

"That's my worry, that it could probably spread," Viniegra said.

Blue Star Recycling formerly illegally stored the toxic materials at the site. The Modern Geosciences report's findings shed light on some of the potential impacts of the massive pile that residents expressed concerns over for years.



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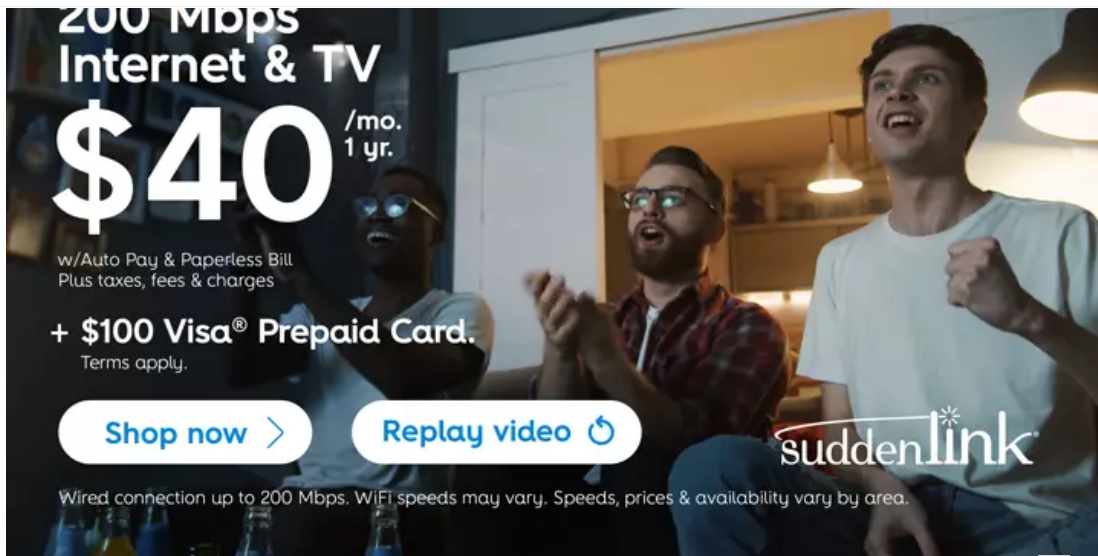
BY

At the end of 2020, a city contractor started removing the shingles from the site. Months later, residents celebrated the end of the mountain with a neighborhood concert.

Marsha Jackson, who also co-chairs the Floral Farms group, said the city should communicate more with neighborhood residents to update them on testing and remediation plans.

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“Reach out to the community. Let us know what is going on,” said Jackson, who lives right by the Shingle Mountain site. “Then go to the public. Give us the first notice.”

Lead exposure can cause brain damage and lead to slow growth and development, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It can lower a child’s IQ, make it harder for them to pay attention and cause them to underperform in school.

The CDC says there’s no known safe level of lead exposure for children.

Natalie Johnson, vice chair of the Interdisciplinary Program in Toxicology at Texas A&M University’s School of Public Health, said if lead is airborne, it poses a greater threat.

“You’ll get more rapid absorption into the bloodstream once you inhale it,” she said.

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near the home.

Residents are **calling** for the Shingle Mountain site to be turned into a park following remediation, which Viniegra hopes will hold historical significance.

Viniegra said the city should learn valuable lessons as a result of the harm Shingle Mountain has caused.

“Be more aware of what actually comes into a neighborhood or a community,” he said.

The city did not respond to requests for comment.



Sophie Austin, Local News Reporter. Sophie Austin is a local news reporter for The Dallas Morning News. She previously interned at PolitiFact, a fact-checking organization. Austin has freelanced for The DC Line, a nonprofit covering local news in Washington, D.C. She also completed a Dow Jones News Fund data journalism residency with Investigative Reporters and Editors instructors.

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