

Town of Shaftsbury Special Select Board Meeting
Monday, July 25, 2016
6:30 p.m.
Cole Hall, 61 Buck Hill Road, Shaftsbury

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm. Present were Select Board members Tim Scoggins (chair), Ken Harrington, and Tony Kulikowski. Also present were Chuck Schwer, Director Waste Management Division, VTDEC; Kasey Katha, Solid Waste Management Program, VTDEC; Cathy Vogel, VT Department of Health; Shannon Tatro, VT Department of Health; Vermont State Representative Alice Miller, Town Administrator David Kiernan, and citizens and audience members.
2. There were no conflicts of interest reported.
3. Announcements: there were none.
4. Public comments: there were none.
5. Mr. Schwer introduced himself. He has been deeply involved in the PFOA response in N. Bennington and Pownal. They will be working with Shaftsbury to test drinking water wells in the vicinity of the Town landfill.

Kasey Kathan, in charge going forward of sampling wells in a ¼ mile radius from landfill, described monitoring at landfill since it was closed. Sampling indicates contamination at landfill “minimal,” some iron manganese, but no volatile organic compounds. Landfill was sampled for PFOAs because of proximity to N. Bennington and because landfill was active when PFOAs were in use in our region.

Four monitoring wells have been routinely sampled at landfill. One monitoring well was sampled twice for presence or absence of PFOA and found 22 and 25 ppt presence of PFOA, which has triggered further sampling in residential wells within ¼ mile radius of the landfill, about 26 wells. A consultant will be contacting landowners in the near future to schedule testing, with results expected within about six weeks.

Ms. Kathan reported that the Town will be responsible for any costs of monitoring and remediation because it is owner and operator of landfill and is therefore responsible. Disagreements were voiced. Mr. Harrington pointed out that when materials were dropped at the landfill, they were legally disposed of, according to state regulations. Mr. Schwer explained that it could be discovered that one or more parties deposited contaminants in the landfill; if so, that party or parties could be found liable. Mr. Schwer reported that the state is just starting to sample landfills; Vermont doesn't yet know how widespread the contamination from landfills is. Sally Eastman, in the audience, reported that about 10 barrels of unknown origin were left on the edge of the landfill near their property line from about 1979 to 1985.

Ms. Tatro from the Department of Health explained what next steps might be. Blood tests may not be called for, depending on findings of well sampling.

Mr. Scoggins suggested that discussions of who should pay long term costs and what those costs might be should be put aside for the time being (as they remain negotiable) and focus instead on learning what health impacts of findings in Shaftsbury may have on residents. Ms. Vogel from VT Department of Health described the possible health effects of PFOA contamination. She said a cause and effect relationship has not been shown, but correlations have been found between PFOA and high cholesterol, hypertension, low birth weight, immune disorders, thyroid disease, kidney cancer, testicular cancer. If one limits exposure to PFOA, blood levels go down by half with 2-4 years.

Mr. Schwer reported that testers will enter each house and sample “before” the water softener connection. Ms. Kathan will also be present for each test. Arrangements will be made for those who work during the day. For those living outside the ¼ mile radius, a private test could cost \$200-\$300. Any concerned person, no matter their location, could logically use bottled water. Mr. Schwer suggested the ¼ mile radius is very conservative: they expect to capture all contamination in that area, but will test in a wider radius if evidence suggests that would be useful. Vermont could also retest if necessary. An audience member suggested testing Howard Park, a hot spot of use. Mr. Scoggins reported that the Park well had been tested for PFOA and found “non-detect.”

Industrial PFOA is likely to be spread by air. Landfilled PFOA is probably not spread by the wind. However, Ms. Eastman indicated that the Town landfill sometimes burned trash.

Ms. Kathan will share weekly DEC updates with anyone who wishes to receive them via email. Ms. Kathan suggests that those just outside the ¼ mile radius might sign up for later testing should it be found necessary. Ms. Tatro recommended contacting their neighbors who might not be aware of the matter.

Links to the Dec can be found on the front page of the Shaftsbury Website: shaftsburyvt.gov.

Kasey Kathan 802 522 0561

VTDEC will notify residents of well testing results personally before the information is made public. Names will be removed from the public announcement.

6. Other business: there was none.
7. Action Items: there were none.
8. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.