

McCrory administration announces successful cleanup of former dry cleaning site in Durham

RALEIGH

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As part of Governor McCrory's commitment to protecting public health and the environment, a site in Durham that was once contaminated by dry cleaning solvents has been cleaned up and can now be evaluated for safe redevelopment.

State environmental officials informed nearby residents and others of the good news about the former One-Hour Martinizing dry cleaning business at 1103 West Club Boulevard in Durham.

"We have thoroughly pursued our investigation and cleanup of this site," said Michael Scott, an acting director with the state environmental department. "Our staff has committed significant resources to ensure the protection of public health and the environment, and I'm happy to report that our aggressive cleanup actions have protected the people living in the community and enabled this former dry cleaning property to be considered for safe redevelopment."

The discovery of high concentrations of a commonly used dry cleaning solvent prompted the state's initial investigation. Environmental officials determined that the solvent had contaminated soil and groundwater at two properties near the former dry cleaning business.

There were no drinking wells in the area. But the investigation did reveal high levels of the chlorinated solvent in the air beneath the former dry cleaning business as well as an adjacent church and two homes in a nearby neighborhood.

As a result, the building that housed the former dry cleaning business was taken down in 2011. Soil was excavated and removed from the site, and the ground was treated to eliminate the dry cleaning solvents. Clean gravel and soil were then placed back at the site. The state also

installed machines and barriers beneath the church and two homes to safely redirect and disburse any contaminated air.

Repeated environmental tests of the area, including the former dry cleaning site, have shown that the state's cleanup efforts are protecting residents and the community, and that the remedy has dramatically reduced levels of contamination where the former dry cleaner was located. The site is an empty lot today, but thanks to these successful cleanup efforts the state can now evaluate it for other productive uses.

The state also kept all interested parties informed throughout the investigation and remediation. Staff members went door-to-door, held public information sessions, created a webpage devoted to the Durham cleanup, and sent out regular updates to an email list of interested people.

“We will continue to proactively monitor wells in the area and conduct air and soil vapor testing to ensure that we continue to protect the environment and public health,” Scott said.

This resource is related to:

NCDEQ Waste Management

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