Equity Environmental Engineering LLC

September Newsletter **2010**

In This Issue

Dear Peter,

We have targeted this newsletter at Urban Studies. Equity provides services in Urban Planning, Traffic Studies, Noise Studies, Parking Studies, Mold Investigations, Property Condition Assessments, Phase I ESAs, Phase II Investigations, Remediation, Environmental Assessment Statements, Brownfield Grant Applications, and Mapping. Jim Heineman provides an overview of the new CEQR manual, Rob Fry gives an introduction to Mold, Bob Jackson discusses powering Brownfields, and we update you on some of the latest EPA regulatory changes.

New CEQR Technical Manual

With the benefit of several months experience working with the revised CEQR Technical Manual and Environmental Assessment Statement (EAS) forms released by the city in mid-May, Equity has evaluated how they differ and how they are consistent with the previous City Environmental Review protocols.

While the new checklist format of the EAS form allows a project to 'screen out' many aspects of

RE-Powering America's Land

The US EPA has a relatively new program entitled "Re-Powering America's Contaminated Lands and Mines" which may be applicable to your overall approach to managing Brownfields. The program is designed to connect Brownfields with renewable energy sources such as wind farms, solar arrays, geothermal installations or manufacturing centers for renewable energy components. The Brownfields sites are beneficial for these uses because they:

- Often have critical infrastructure in place including electric transmission lines, roads and water on-site, and are adequately zoned for such development;
- Provide an economically viable reuse for sites with significant cleanup costs or low real estate development demand;
- Take the stress off undeveloped lands for construction of new energy facilities, preserving the land carbon sink; and
- Provide job opportunities in urban communities.

Stakeholders work with the Department of Energy's National Renewal Energy Lab (NREL) to identify brownfields, Superfund, and RCRA sites that are strong candidates for renewable energy projects. There are often additional state and federal grant, loan and tax incentive programs that can help make the project more affordable. A recently proposed Senate bill would give three times the tax credit for renewable energy developers that site projects at contaminated proprieties. There are already early signs that the program will be

environmental review without any narrative at all, many of the procedures and criteria are unchanged. One aspect that has changed, though, is the new emphasis on a project's visual and urban design attributes, and how it relates to the existing streetscape. In addition to including photographs of the subject site and its surroundings in the submission, the CEQR Manual prescribes a detailed graphic presentation and narrative description of building heights, lot coverage, streetscape, and building orientation. Some of these matters may be somewhat subjective, and don't always lend themselves to the type of quantification that exists in other areas of environmental assessment where numerical projections of

successful. In Maywood, California, rooftop solar panels are being used to offset power costs for water pumping and treating systems at a Superfund site undergoing remediation. It should be noted that while the new program and incentives could spur greater interest in brownfields redevelopment, deals could be tough to navigate given that they may involve multiple state and federal agencies, redevelopers, property owners and energy companies. The EPA's website for this program is :http://www.epa.gov/oswercpa/

Bob Jackson
Source: US EPA

Curb Appeal or Approval

Equity Environmental Engineering recently provided traffic assessment support to an application for a Zoning Authorization to allow a homeowner on the upper east side of Manhattan to allow an off-street parking space in his house. This application received a certain amount of notoriety (http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/01/realestate/01cov.html?pagewanted=all) because of the conflict between city policy which generally seeks to limit curb cuts in densely populated areas with high pedestrian activity, and the homeowner's desire for secure vehicular access to his home, primarily because of his elderly relative's limited mobility

Equity also provided support by presenting at the local community board hearing on the matter. In our written report and presentation to the local community board, we provided a factual basis to support the application, addressing pedestrian and vehicular activity in front of the site, the local context including the presence of other driveways in the area, and the limited number of vehicle movements that would occur into and out of the driveway.

While the project was not popular with the local community board, and the section of the Zoning Resolution under which the application was made has subsequently been modified, the application was approved by the city on the basis of the project team's demonstration that the factual requirements of the zoning, as it was written at the time of the application, had been met.

If you have simple or complex applications with your local community board and would like Equity to assist you through the process, please contact Jim Heineman atJim.Heineman@equityenvironmental.com.

Mold in the Urban Environment (Part 1 of 2)

contaminant concentrations in parts per million (ppm) or seconds of stopped traffic delay can be made with precision.

Nonetheless, the appearance of a building is often of great interest to community residents as well as decision-makers and other project stakeholders. Many times we have attended Community Board hearings where the discussion was less about how much more crowded the subway would be or how a site's cleanup would be handled than about a gut feeling that a building was simply 'too big' for its surroundings. Those of us with a more number-crunching background need to reorient ourselves to recognize that in real life, people don't have a stopwatch that tells them that it now takes an extra 1.3 seconds to get through an

What is Mold?

Mold is a "fuzzy" growth produced on organic matter by several types of fungi. Mold is also known as mildew. Black bread mold (i.e., Aspergillus Niger), one of the most familiar molds, begins as a microscopic, airborne spore that germinates on contact with the moist surface of nonliving organic matter. It spreads rapidly, forming the mycelium, which is made up of a fine network of filaments. The mycelium produces other clusters of root-like hyphae, called rhizoids, which penetrate the organic material, secreting enzymes and absorbing water and digested sugars and starches. Clusters of hyphae (called sporangiophores) then reach upwards, forming sporangia, which bear the particular color of the mold species. On ripening, the sporangia break open and the windborne spores land elsewhere to reproduce asexually.

Molds are part of our natural environment. In the outdoor environment, molds play a part in nature by breaking down dead organic matter such as dead trees and fallen leaves, but indoors, mold growth should be avoided. Mold may begin growing indoors when the mold spores land on moist/wet surfaces. There are many types of mold, and none of them will grow without water or moisture.

Health problems associated with Mold

Molds do have the potential to cause health problems. Molds produce allergens, irritants, and in some cases, potentially toxic substances (mycotoxins). Inhaling or touching mold or mold spores may cause allergic reactions in sensitive individuals. Allergic responses include hay fever-type symptoms, such as sneezing, runny nose, red eyes, and skin rash (dermatitis). Allergic reactions to mold are common. Allergic reactions can be delayed or immediate. Additionally, molds can trigger asthma attacks in asthmatics who are allergic to mold. Mold exposure can irritate the skin, nose, eyes, throat, and lungs of both mold-allergic and non-allergic people. Consult a health care professional or your local or state health department for more detailed information on the potential health effects of mold.

Testing for Mold

Testing for mold can be accomplished by a variety of methods. For example;

- Taplet samples for mold analysis (e.g., clear tape pressed against suspect surface)
- Bulk samples for mold analysis (e.g., cut a piecesuspect material such as drywall, wallpaper, or carpet)
- Swab samples for mold or bacteria analysis (note

intersection. They do look at the buildings on their street every day, and what they see is of paramount importance in how they experience their neighborhood and its progress and/or decline. Providing an accurate and fair disclosure of a project's urban design attributes is an important part of environmental review in New York City.

Equity has the staff, software, and savvy necessary to meet the new CEQR requirements, and provide informative presentation material to allow for a meaningful consideration of these newly prominent urban values. If you would like more information, please email Jim Heineman at jim.heineman@equityenvironmental.com

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that wet swabs are recommended for dry surfaces and dry swabs are recommended for wet surfaces)

- (non-culture) air samples collected via volumetric air sampling pumps

How do I get rid of mold?

Due to mold being a part of the natural environment, it is impossible to get rid of all mold and mold spores indoors; some mold spores will be found floating through the air and in house dust. Indoor mold growth can and should be prevented (or controlled) by controlling the moisture content indoors. If there is mold growth in your office or home, you must clean up the mold and fix the moisture/water problem(s). If you clean up the mold, but don't fix the moisture issues, most likely the mold will come back.

Part 2 of 2 of *Mold in the Urban Environment* will be posted in our next newsletter and will consist of the following topics: Finding a Mold Problem, Hidden Mold, Moisture and Mold Prevention Tips.

If you have any questions regarding mold please feel free to contact Robert Fry at **robert.fry@equityenvironmental.com**

Sources:

http://www.moldbacteria.com/sendingsamples.html

http://www.epa.gov/mold/moldbasics.html

http://inspectapedia.com/sickhouse/bulksamp.htm

http://consumeraffairs.com/news04/mold.html

EPA Regulatory Headlines

EPA has issued a new 1-hour sulfur dioxide (SO2) standard under the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQA). The new standard is 75 parts per billion calculated as a 3-year average of the 99th percentile of the annual distribution of daily maximum 1-hour average concentrations. The EPA has revoked the previous primary standard of 140 ppb (24-hour standard) and 30 ppb (annual standard) as they do not provide the same level of protection of public health the new standard will. The rule became effective 8/23/10.

EPA is proposing to regulate coal ash for the first time to address the potential risk from the disposal of the wastes generated by electric utilities and independent power producers. This is in part in response to a surface impoundment spill of coal ash that flooded over 300 acres of land near Kingston, TN and flowed into the Emory and Clinch Rivers. The proposed rule, "Disposal of Coal Ash Residual's from Electric Utilities", will fall under RCRA. EPA will either regulate the ash as a special waste

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under subtitle C of RCRA or under subtitle D of RCRA as a non-hazardous waste. The proposed rule was promulgated on June 21, 2010 and will be revised based on administrative corrections and public comment.

I hope that you found the newsletter interesting and informative. If you would like to receive assistance or more information on any of the subjects, please call us at (973)527-7451 or email us.

The children are back in school and the weather is changing already. Can the fall explosion of color be far behind? it's a great time for apple picking and selecting the perfect pumpkin for Halloween.

Peter Jaran
Equity Environmental Engineering LLC