

Corozal Well Site, Corozal, Puerto Rico

Public Health Assessment Summary

PUBLIC COMMENT VERSION

Purpose:

This fact sheet provides information about the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry's (ATSDR's) report on the Corozal Well Site. The public health assessment report is ATSDR's evaluation of whether the chemicals found in the well and creek water at the site could affect the health of people who live there, and recommends what actions are needed to protect public health.

Background:

- The Corozal Well site is located in north-central Puerto Rico. The well provides drinking water to approximately 240 people in Palo Blanco, Corozal and Cedro Abajo Naranjito.
- Chemicals called volatile organic compounds (VOCs), such as tetrachlorethylene (PCE), are in the well water and nearby creek.
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) installed a carbon filter to remove PCE. They continue testing the water to make sure the filter is working.
- The U.S. EPA added the site to their National Priorities List (NPL).
- ATSDR evaluated exposure of nearby residents to VOCs in the well water and other potential exposure pathways.



Photo of the Corozal Well.

ATSDR Concludes:

- People who use the well water are not at risk of harmful effects from VOCs in the water.
- Past exposures to VOCs from drinking or using water from the Corozal well were below levels likely to cause harm. Because no sampling data are available before 2010, ATSDR estimated past exposure doses for PCE in Corozal water using the actual contaminant levels recorded since 2010. Contaminant and concentrations can change over time, so the levels since 2010 may not be representative of the time period of interest and therefore may underestimate or overestimate exposures.
- It is unlikely that any occasional contact to creek water would pose a hazard.
- More environmental testing is needed to assess if people have been or might be exposed to VOCs contaminants in sediment, surface water, biota, and movement of VOCs from groundwater through soil and into the air inside homes (vapor intrusion).



Photo of a creek near the Corozal Well.

ATSDR Recommends:

- U.S. EPA and /or local government continue to characterize the extent of the contamination at the site.
- U.S. EPA continue operating and maintaining the carbon filter treatment system until the Corozal well groundwater source contamination (e.g., VOCs) is below levels of health concern. Notify the Puerto Rico Department of Health (PRDOH) as well as the community in the event any contaminant at a level of health concern is detected.
- The PRDOH continues overseeing the Corozal well operation; the local water system operator continue maintaining the system and routinely monitoring the water per the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) requirements.
- ATSDR will evaluate additional data collected by EPA and /or local government and update the findings of this PHA, if necessary. For example, ATSDR will reevaluate the site exposure scenarios when the contamination source is identified.



View of the area from Corozal Well Water Treatment Facility.

How to Review and Comment on ATSDR's Draft Findings:

The ATSDR report on the Corozal Site is available for review at:

Escuela Felipa Sánchez Cruzado
Carr 811 Km 5 Hm 9
Bo. Cedro Abajo
Naranjito, PR 00719
Tel: 787-869-4231

A copy of the report is also available at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/publiccomment.html>

Your comments will improve the quality of the report. Send comments by **JUNE 16, 2014** to ATSDR.RecordsCenter@cdc.gov, or mail to:

ATSDR Records Center
Attention: Rolanda Morrison
RE: Corozal Well Site, Corozal, PR
1600 Clifton Road, NE (MS F-09)
Atlanta, Georgia 30333

About ATSDR

ATSDR stands for the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. It is a federal public health agency and part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. ATSDR promotes healthy and safe environments and prevents harmful exposures to toxic substances. Congress requires that ATSDR conduct public health activities at contaminated sites on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) National Priorities List (NPL).

Comments received during the public comment period, without the names of who submitted them, and ATSDR responses will appear in an appendix to the final PHA. If requested under the U.S. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the names of those who submit comments might be releasable under FOIA rules.