

## Summary - Public Health Assessment for Public Comment

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) evaluated the potential for harmful health effects from past or current exposure to volatile organic compounds (VOCs) including perchloroethylene (PCE) in soil, water, or air near the PCE Southeast Contamination Site. This fact sheet summarizes ATSDR's findings and recommendations published in a draft report available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/TSP/PHA/PHALanding.aspx>. Public comments on the report will be accepted until January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is currently cleaning up the site.

### ATSDR's Key Findings

Vapor intrusion is not expected to harm the health of children or adults living or working near contaminated areas where vapor mitigation systems have been properly installed and maintained.

Vapor intrusion occurs when VOCs in the soil travel up into the air inside homes and buildings (see *Figure A diagram*).

Vapor mitigation systems remove contaminated vapor from underneath buildings and vent the contaminated vapors into the outside air.

If the soil vapor plume moves or if buildings develop cracks or undergo changes the extent of vapor intrusion may change.

Residents using the York public water supply are not being exposed to PCE, TCE, or other VOCs from the site.

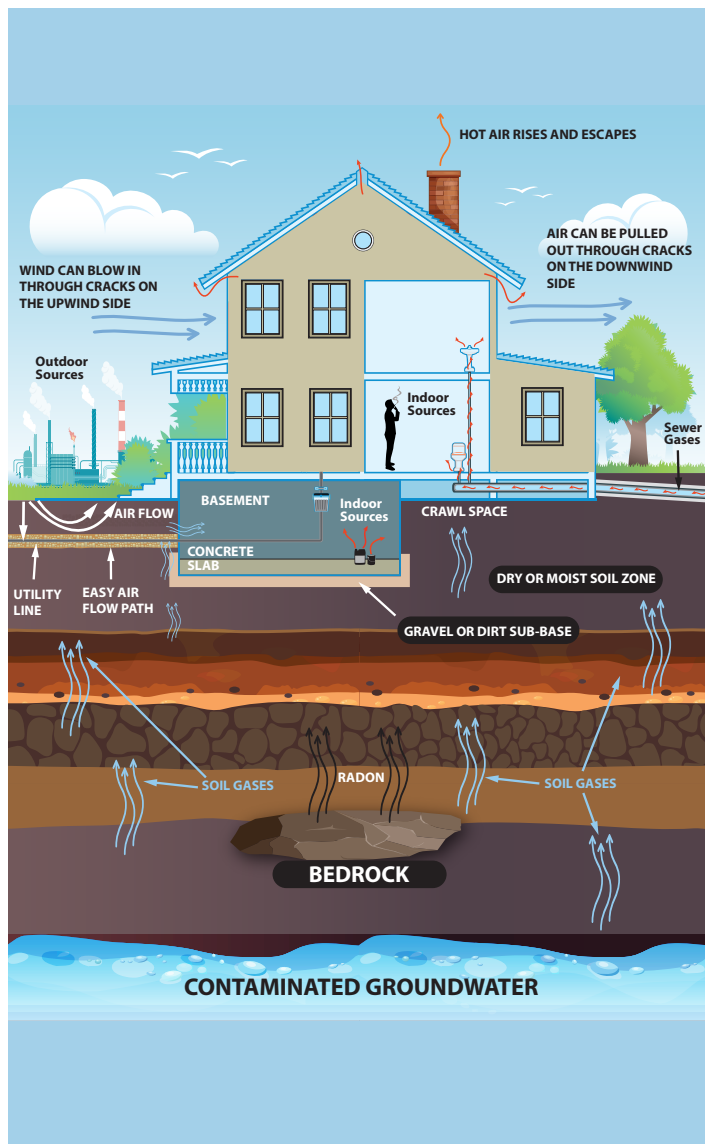
Residents with whole house filtration systems are not being exposed to harmful levels of contaminants in their well water if the whole house filtration systems are properly maintained.

It's unlikely that people in the community will come into direct contact with contaminants in the soil because the contaminants are several feet below the ground. Remediation or utility workers who dig in the soil are required to wear protective clothing to protect their health.

### ATSDR's Recommendations

Residents with whole house filtration systems that are not connected to the public water supply are advised to replace their filters according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

Residents with vapor mitigation systems are advised to leave them powered on continuously until the groundwater contaminant levels no longer present a vapor intrusion hazard. When powered on, these systems keep contaminants from entering residences and commercial properties. ATSDR recommends EPA provide a lock box to residents with mitigation units. The lock box should be on the outside power switch to keep units from being inadvertently turned off.



**Figure A: Vapor Intrusion Diagram.**

**Source:** <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pha-guidance/resources/>

## About the Site and ATSDR's Involvement

In the past, some of the drycleaners in York improperly disposed VOCs used in their businesses leading to the contamination of soils, groundwater, and eventually indoor air in the area (see *Figure B below*). When VOCs were found in private drinking water wells at unsafe levels, the EPA added the PCE Southeast Contamination Site to the National Priorities List (NPL) in May 2014. The NPL sites are a national priority for cleanup due to hazardous substances. The EPA has determined cleanup actions for the site.

To ensure residents had access to safe drinking water, residents affected by the dry cleaner PCE contamination were offered a connection to the public drinking water supply. Most residents chose to connect to the public drinking water supply. The remaining residents chose to install a whole house filtration system. ATSDR worked with the EPA to get air, soil, and water sampling data needed to conduct an exposure evaluation that looked at whether residents of York were potentially exposed to VOCs. ATSDR is releasing this public health assessment report with the results of our analysis.

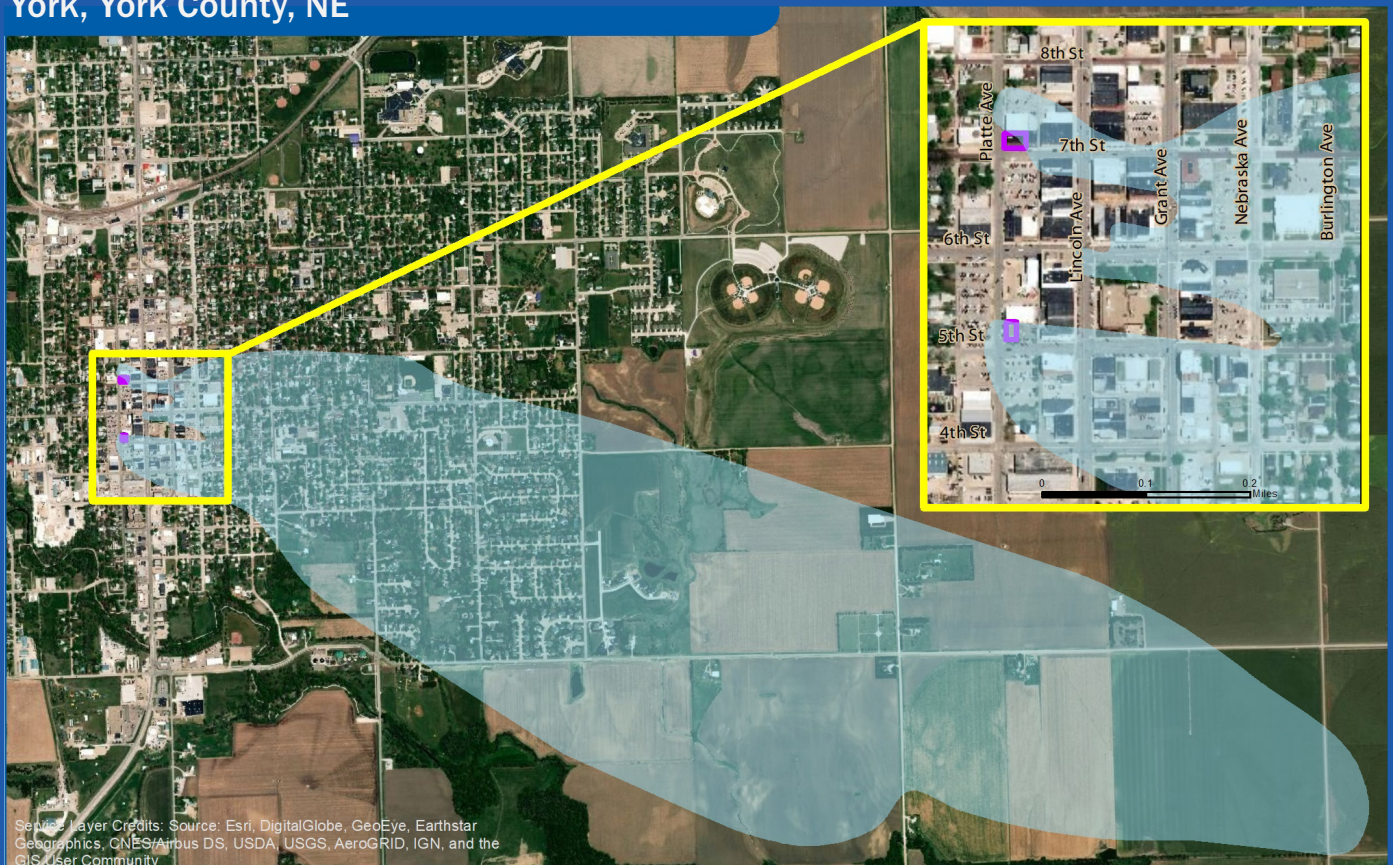
## Why is ATSDR Involved with the Site?

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) was created by Congress in 1980 under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). CERCLA is also known as the Superfund law. Under the Superfund law, ATSDR is charged with assessing the presence and nature of health hazards to communities living near Superfund sites, helping prevent or reduce harmful exposures, and expanding the knowledge base about the health effects that result from exposure to hazardous substances.

## Where Can I Get More Information About the Site?

If you have any questions, call us toll free at 1-800-CDC-INFO or 1-800-232-4636. Ask for information on the PCE Southeast Contamination site. Information can also be found at [www.atsdr.cdc.gov](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov).

### PCE Southeast Contamination Site York, York County, NE



Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

Figure B: Groundwater Contamination in York, NE. Source: ATSDR