

State: Gives all-clear at recreation field

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water samples before issuing a final report by mid-June, Peachey said.

The state is also testing soil, water and air on the adjacent Southside High School property.

Testing at the school and industrial site was ordered earlier this month after it was learned that at least 25 current or former students at Southside High School had developed cancer since the school opened in 1979. At least two have died.

The state and Chemung County health departments are investigating the cancer cases, trying to determine how many there are, the types of cancers and what, if any, link they might have to the school or industrial properties.

The state Health Department also took soil samples from the recreation site and school.

The school was built on 36 acres that had housed factories since 1887. A 47-acre site adjacent to the school was home to manufacturing facilities that made everything from cars and bomb sights to firetrucks and typewriters.

The former LaFrance site was recently cleaned up after the owner, Scott Technologies Inc. of Mayfield, Ohio, discovered hazardous waste on the property. The waste included arsenic, lead, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) partially incinerated materials and beryllium — all known cancer-causing substances. The partially incinerated materials, known as polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, were found at levels 1,000 times higher than allowed by law.

A dozen above- and below-ground tanks — some containing gasoline and paint-stripping chemicals —

For more information

■ Call: Meaghan Boice-Green, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, 716/226-5326.

■ Any student or former student at Southside High School who has cancer is asked to call Thomas Kump, Chemung County Health Department, 607/737-2019.

were found at the site and were removed or cleaned.

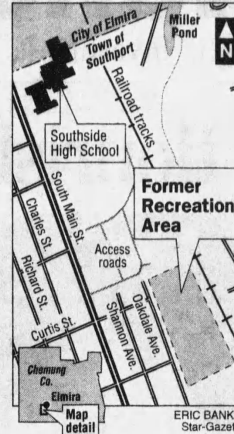
Now the state is testing the school property for more than 100 compounds, including those found on the industrial property, Peachey said.

A spring-fed pond on the industrial property, just south of the school, was also tested this week. Tests done on the pond in the early 1990s found small amounts of cancer-causing PCBs in the water.

The pond drains into nearby Coldbrook Creek, which runs into Seeley Creek, which empties into the Chemung River. The creek and the marshy area around the creek, east of the industrial site, are also being tested, Peachey said.

The school property is being cleaned of old fuel oil, located 15 feet underground, that apparently leaked from buried fuel tanks on the former industrial property. State officials say that oil poses no health problems.

The state says the former Remington Rand and American LaFrance property is clean and safe. But the



state conservation department wants the test results before approving the Scott Technologies cleanup.

"I believe the rest of the (Scott Technologies) property has been cleaned up according to plan," Peachey said.

Scott Technologies volunteered to perform the cleanup, which is expected to cost nearly \$900,000. In return, the state agreed not to hold the company liable for future environmental problems with the land. Scott hopes to sell the property for future industrial use.

The conservation department hopes to have a full report on the cleanup of the school and industrial site available to the public by mid-August, Peachey said.

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