

ConocoPhillips is implementing a program in the Santa Maria Valley to test former drilling sites for the possible presence of drilling sumps. Drilling for oil historically involved the construction of holding areas called sumps. These sumps were used to contain water, drilling mud and oily soil. Sumps varied in size but were often as large as the average size lot. Some sumps were removed when wells were plugged and shut down; others were filled and covered with dirt in compliance with regulatory guidelines of that time period.

Some of the sumps in the Santa Maria Valley remain on open land, while others are located in or near areas that have since been developed for business and residential uses.

Through historical records and aerial photographs, we have identified specific sites where sumps may have been built during the 1930s through the 1960s.

ConocoPhillips has completed testing in some of the areas where we believe sumps might be located. We have identified and removed several sumps and are continuing to work on others. Testing has also identified several sites that did not contain sumps. The sumps on these sites were likely removed before or during property development.

Testing and studies by independent experts in the Santa Maria area indicate that buried sump materials do not exceed levels considered safe for human health exposure. For additional information on these studies, please contact the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department at (805) 346-8421.

Our program is currently focused on residential neighborhoods. ConocoPhillips staff members are working with property owners and appropriate regulatory agencies to test for sumps in these areas and discuss the cleanup options if a sump is found. A common method is to remove any sump material and replace it with clean approved fill.



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Santa Maria Valley Soil Testing Program



The goal of testing is to determine if sump material exists on the property and, if so, identify the concentration and extent of sump material. Testing on developed property involves boring a series of approximately 4-inch diameter holes. The number of holes needed varies depending on what is found during the testing.

1

A hole is cut into landscaping that is located over a testing area.



2

A hand auger is used to bore a hole into the ground.



The auger is able to obtain samples in most soil conditions and in tight spaces next to buildings.



3

Soil samples are placed in glass sample containers and the containers are stored in a plastic cooler to maintain the integrity of the samples until they are analyzed at an independent laboratory.



4

Testing technicians work to minimize damage to the property and repair damage caused by the testing.



This program is being carried out with appropriate regulatory supervision. The results will be provided to the property owners and they will be available to the public. For more information, contact us by calling the ConocoPhillips Soil Testing Program Hotline at (805) 928-6645.

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