



Charles D. Baker, Governor  
Karyn E. Polito, Lieutenant Governor  
Jamey Tesler, Secretary & CEO  
Jonathan L. Gulliver, Highway Administrator



May 4, 2022

Mr. Thomas G. Ambrosino  
City Manager  
Chelsea City Hall  
500 Broadway  
Chelsea, MA 02150

Dear Manager Ambrosino:

Thank you for your time this morning to discuss the soil temporarily stockpiled within a portion of the Route 1 / Route 16 interchange in Chelsea.

First, I want to apologize that this situation caught you and other Chelsea officials unaware. It was never our intention to leave the community uninformed and even though this situation developed quickly our communication did not live up to our standards. I apologize, and you have our commitment that MassDOT is taking steps to ensure that this does not happen again in Chelsea or any other community.

I also want to assure you that we have treated the stockpiled material in accordance with all regulations and at no time was the health and safety of the community at risk. Finally, you have our commitment that we are working with our contractor and regulatory authorities to remove the stockpiled material as expeditiously as possible.

The soil was excavated as part of the ongoing replacement of the Belden G. Bly Drawbridge on Route 107 at the Lynn/Saugus line and was temporarily stockpiled within the Highway layout along the outside edge of Route 1 South between the on and off ramps. As part of the construction operation the excavated material was inspected for signs of debris or other deleterious materials before being transported and stockpiled at the Route 1 interchange. The temporarily stockpiled material in Chelsea was then tested for the presence of contamination by the contractor's Licensed Site Professional (LSP). This initial testing determined that there was no reportable levels of contamination in the material.

When the contractor was preparing to remove the soil from the temporary stockpile the LSP observed a small area where some pieces of pipe and building debris were present in the stockpiled soils. It was common for many types of building materials manufactured prior to the 1980's to contain asbestos and testing confirmed the presence of asbestos in this small area. Soil removal was subsequently halted and the portion of the stockpile where the asbestos debris was observed was covered.

The LSP then developed a disposal plan with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Even though the amount of contaminated material is quite small – less than 10 yards – out of an abundance of caution the decision was made to treat the entire soil stockpile as containing asbestos debris. An updated work plan was recently approved by the DEP and we expect that removal will commence within the next 2-3 weeks after final permits are secured.

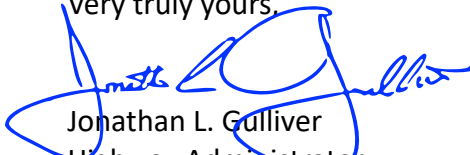
The testing, handling and proposed removal of the stockpile has been carried out in full compliance with all applicable regulations in collaboration with the DEP. The volume of asbestos debris within the stockpile is small and does not present a threat to public safety or health. Air quality monitoring has been and will continue to be conducted whenever the stockpile is being disturbed as part of the removal operations.

As discussed, MassDOT is committed to:

- Double cover the stockpile (completed on May 4, 2022).
- A full transparent partnership with the City of Chelsea by working in collaboration with the City's LSP to review the site and soil removal process.
- Removing the material and restoring the interchange area as soon as possible. It is anticipated this work will begin within the next two to three weeks.

In the meantime, MassDOT will provide local leaders with regular updates on the status of the removal and we are available to address any additional issues or concerns.

Very truly yours,



Jonathan L. Gulliver  
Highway Administrator

Cc: Paul Stedman, District 4 Highway Director  
John McInerney, PE, District 6 Highway Director  
Jess Kenney, MassDOT Director of Environmental Services