# Greenbelt Standpipe Rehabilitation Project

*Lead Containment and Air Quality Protection Measures*

Dear Greenbelt Neighbor,

WSSC Water understands that work involving lead-based coatings on a water storage tank can raise understandable concerns. We want to provide clear information about the containment systems, air quality monitoring, and additional protective steps being used during the Greenbelt Standpipe Rehabilitation Project.

The contractor is using specialized equipment, containment practices, air monitoring, and independent oversight designed to protect workers, neighbors, and the surrounding environment while this important rehabilitation work is completed.

## 1. Purpose of the Work

The Greenbelt Standpipe is being rehabilitated to extend the service life of the tank and ensure it continues to provide reliable water storage for the community. As part of this work, older coatings must be removed from portions of the tank before new protective coatings can be applied.

Because some of the existing coating contains lead, the contractor is required to follow strict lead safety, containment, monitoring, and disposal requirements. WSSC Water is also requiring additional oversight and protective measures beyond the basic work activity itself.

## 2. How Lead Containment Works with the Faster Blaster

For much of the exterior tank surface, the contractor is using a robotic blasting system called the Faster Blaster. This equipment is designed to remove old coating from the tank while containing removed material within the machine.

The Faster Blaster uses a sealed blasting head that attaches directly to the tank surface. As the machine removes coating, a strong vacuum system pulls spent material, dust, and removed paint into a dust collection system. The removed material is collected in a sealed 55-gallon drum for handling and disposal.

In simple terms, the Faster Blaster works like a contained, vacuum-assisted coating removal system. Rather than allowing blasting material and removed coating to spread into the surrounding area, the system is designed to capture material immediately as the work is performed.


*Faster Blaster equipment operating on the tank exterior.*

## 3. How Lead Is Contained in Areas the Faster Blaster Cannot Reach

There are some areas of the tank where the Faster Blaster cannot operate effectively, including certain areas near the top of the tank, around structural features, and near the bottom of the tank where access is more limited.

In those areas, the contractor uses other approved containment methods appropriate for the specific work activity and location. The goal is the same: to keep removed coating, dust, and spent blasting material contained within the work area and prevent material from leaving the site.

For areas near the bottom of the tank, including the lower two-foot band and other areas the Faster Blaster cannot reach, the contractor is using a localized containment approach designed for vapor abrasive blasting. This includes:

- **Ground tarps extending beyond the immediate blast zone to collect spent media and paint debris;**
- **Local tarp or plywood barriers around the base of the standpipe to help prevent wind from carrying material outside the work area;**
- **Controlled work zones to limit access to active work areas; and**
- **Vacuum-assisted blasting equipment where robotic equipment cannot safely or effectively access the surface.**

Where the Faster Blaster cannot form a proper seal or safely access the tank surface, the contractor is using an EcoQuip 2 vapor abrasive blasting system with a vacuum-assisted shroud. The shroud seals against the tank surface and is designed to capture spent blasting media and loosened paint at the point of removal.

## 4. Why Work Is Limited to a Small Area at the Bottom of the Tank

Some of the current work is limited to a narrow, two-foot band near the bottom of the standpipe. This smaller work area allows the contractor to prepare the site for upcoming utility work while keeping the active blasting area localized and easier to contain.

Because the work area is limited, the contractor can use more focused containment measures, including ground protection, localized barriers, and vacuum-assisted blasting equipment. This approach helps reduce the potential for material to move beyond the immediate work zone.

## 5. Lead Stabilization

The contractor is also adding a lead-stabilizing product, such as Blastox, to the blasting media. This helps chemically stabilize lead particles in the removed coating material and reduces the potential for lead to leach from the waste material after it is collected.

This is another protective measure intended to help manage the removed material safely after it is captured and prepared for disposal.

## 6. How Air Quality Is Being Monitored

Air quality monitoring is being conducted throughout the project to help confirm that containment systems are working as intended and that the surrounding community remains protected.

Neighbors may notice several silver, birdhouse-shaped boxes placed around the perimeter of the tank site. These are the project's air monitoring devices. The devices are positioned around the site to collect air samples continuously while blasting activities are underway.

Before blasting began, the contractor completed baseline air monitoring to document existing air quality conditions at the site. Samples collected during active blasting will be compared to those baseline results. The collected samples will be sent to a laboratory for analysis. Once available, results will be shared on WSSC Water's website so neighbors can review the information.

*Air monitoring device located within the project site.*

## 7. Compliance with Lead Safety Requirements

Lead abatement work is subject to strict federal and state safety requirements. The contractor is required to follow applicable lead-in-construction rules, including worker protection, respiratory protection, medical monitoring, containment, cleanup, exposure monitoring, and proper handling of lead-containing waste.

Required safety measures include medical monitoring for workers, appropriate personal protective equipment, respiratory protection for workers performing abrasive blasting, air monitoring, and controlled handling and disposal of removed material.

WSSC Water takes these requirements seriously. In addition to the contractor's required compliance responsibilities, WSSC Water has added independent oversight to provide another level of review and accountability throughout the project.

## 8. Additional Protective Measures and Independent Oversight

WSSC Water is not relying solely on contractor self-reporting. Independent specialty consultants are also involved in oversight of the work. This includes industrial hygiene monitoring, soil sampling, coating inspection, and tank industry oversight.

These independent professionals are on site to observe the work, identify concerns, and help ensure that any deficiencies are addressed promptly. If an issue is identified, the project team is expected to take corrective action.

| Requirement | How It Is Being Met |
|---|---|
| Medical monitoring plan | Contractor provides blood lead level testing and medical surveillance for all workers, as required under 29 CFR 1926.62(j). |
| Proper Personal Protective Equipment | Workers wear Type CE supplied-air respirators, NIOSH-approved for lead abrasive blasting, along with full protective clothing and gloves. |
| Continuous air monitoring | An independent industrial hygiene firm is on site continuously conducting real-time air monitoring to help ensure lead levels remain below permissible exposure limits. |
| Soil monitoring | The industrial hygiene firm also performs soil sampling to verify that lead contamination is not migrating outside the work zone. |
| NACE-certified inspectors | NACE (Natl. Assn. of Corrosion Engineers), now known as the Association for Materials Protection and Performance (AMPP), certified coating inspectors on site to inspect and approve all surface preparation and coating installation work. |
| Tank industry consultants | Independent tank industry consultants are on site continuously to oversee the contractor's work and ensure compliance with all project specifications. |

These steps provide additional layers of protection, monitoring, and accountability beyond the basic containment measures used during blasting.

## 9. Our Commitment to the Community

WSSC Water is committed to protecting public health, worker safety, and the surrounding community throughout the Greenbelt Standpipe Rehabilitation Project.

We will continue to monitor the work, review air quality information, oversee contractor compliance, and share information with neighbors as the project progresses.

We appreciate your patience, questions, and continued engagement as this important rehabilitation work is completed.