



West View Shores Civic Association, Inc.
Top of the Chesapeake Bay
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COMMUNITY MEETING, MARCH 16 at 9 AM BOHEMIA MANOR HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

A meeting for all property owners in West View Shores, Bay View Estates and other residents in the surrounding area will be held on March 16 at 9 AM at Bohemia Manor High School to learn about the report on Pearce Creek and planned dredging operations in the Elk River and the Upper Bay.

PEARCE CREEK REPORT RELEASED BY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

The report to study the groundwater quality in and around West View Shores was released by the Corps of Engineers in mid-January. Water quality in our community has been a long standing issue and of great importance to us all. The announcement a few years ago by the Corps that they were exploring re-opening the Pearce Creek Dredge Material Containment Area (DMCA) prompted even greater concern.

The Corps engaged the US Geological Survey to evaluate the feasibility of reopening the site. The study found that the DMCA does affect the groundwater in our community. There are three aquifers under our community: the Magothy, the Upper Patapsco Shallow water-bearing zone, and the Upper Patapsco Deep water-bearing zone. Both the Magothy and the Upper Patapsco shallow water bearing zone are affected. The Upper Patapsco deep water-bearing zone does not seem to be affected. This aquifer was not studied in as much detail as the other; therefore, it's viability as a source for our wells has not been conclusively proven.

The abstract from the report reads as follows:

In 2009, to support an evaluation of the feasibility of reopening the Pearce Creek Dredge Material Containment Area (DMCA) in Cecil County, Maryland, for dredge-spoil disposal, the US Geological Survey (USGS) began to implement a comprehensive study designed to improve the understanding of the hydrogeologic framework, hydrology, and water quality of shallow aquifers underlying the DMCA and adjacent communities, to determine whether or not the DMCA affected groundwater quality, and to assess whether or not groundwater samples contained chemical constituents at levels greater than maximum allowable or recommended levels established by the US Environmental Protection Agency Safe Drinking Water Act.

The study, conducted in 2010-2011 by USGS in cooperation with the US Army Corps of Engineers, included installation of observation wells in areas where gaps led earlier studies to be inconclusive. The data from new wells and existing monitoring locations were interpreted and show the DMCA influences the groundwater flow and quality. Groundwater flow in the two primary aquifers used for local supplies (the Magothy aquifer and the Upper Patapsco aquifer

(shallow water-bearing zone) – is radially outward from the DMCA to the discharge areas, including West View Shores, the Elk River, and Pearce Creek Lake. In addition to horizontal flow outward from the DMCA, vertical gradients primarily are downward in most of the study area, and upward near the Elk River on the north side of the DMCA property, and the western part of West View Shores. Integrating groundwater geochemistry data in the analysis, the influence of the DMCA is not only a source of elevated concentrations of dissolved solids but also a geochemical driver of redox processes that enhances the mobilization and transport of redox-sensitive metals and nutrients. Groundwater affected by the DMCA is in the Magothy aquifer and upper Patapsco aquifer (shallow water-bearing zone.) Based on minimal data, the water quality in the upper Patapsco aquifer deep water-bearing zone does not seem to have been impacted by the DMCA.

The Army Corps of Engineers has begun to hold meetings in conjunction with the USGS and representatives of the Port of Baltimore about this report. They have met with Cecil County Council and on Saturday, February 9 met with the WVSCA board and some members of our community and also with Bay View Estates representatives. Members of the Bay View Estates and the West View Shores communities have requested that a public water system be explored as a potential solution. This has been a discussion at West View Shores community meetings in the past.

Collectively we must all try to work toward a solution and make decisions that are best for all of us.

Report Posted on WVS Website

The WVSCA board wants to be sure that all property owners are aware of the report and has posted the complete report on our web page: wvsca.org. It is listed under the News heading. The report can also be accessed at <http://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2012/5263/>.

The section of the report titled *Integration of Findings* which begins on page 140 of the report is very informative. If you do not have time to read the entire report, this section will be helpful to you.

Any property owner whose well was tested for this study should have received information about their well in the mail. If you have not, contact Cheryl Dieter from USGS at cadieter@usgs.gov.

**Please plan to attend the community meeting on March 16 at 9 AM
Bohemia Manor High School Auditorium**

This is an important issue for our community.

