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Agency of Transportation detects contaminated soil at North Hero drawbridge site

Montpelier, Vt. – The Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT) has detected contaminated soil at the construction site of the replacement drawbridge between Grand Isle and North Hero. The Agency suspected the presence of lead around the bridge from previous paint systems, and recent testing yielded positive results for some lead as well as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

The initial testing was conducted to determine whether the soil contained lead. While that concern was verified from those tests, more information was needed to ensure the soil was disposed of properly. A second round of soil testing was conducted from different areas of the project site, which uncovered unexpected PCB contamination in those areas.

AOT has notified the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, as well as other regulators that issued environmental permits to AOT for the project. AOT will work with regulators to ensure the contaminated soil is properly managed.

“VTrans is working collaboratively with regulators to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken to address this issue,” said Chief Engineer Wayne Symonds. “Safety and environmental stewardship are top priorities in everything we do.”

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