

Storybook Farm’s Backyard

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This year my husband Julius and I celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary. Julius has a medical condition that causes severe cramping of his muscles, especially in his legs. He is often

in pain and there are times when he cannot walk. The doctors do not know what the condition is or why he is having these symptoms. We wonder if our environment is to blame. This is a sad situation, but it does make us grateful for each day we are together.

Our Neighbor: A Toxic Polluter

Our family was settled in our home and our child care business, A Storybook Farm, was in operation for over ten years when a galvanizing plant opened next door to us. We received no warning about the galvanizing plant, even though this polluting industry adjoins our property.

Galvanizing plants operate with almost no pollution controls. Their tanks of hot metal, acid, and caustic chemicals are open to the atmosphere.

Galvanizing contaminants include lead, zinc, chromium, and particulates. Our soil shows elevated levels of these pollutants. Our daughters and grandchildren are showing signs of the same condition that torments my husband. They were all raised or spent much of their childhood right here in our home beside the galvanizing plant.

Before this polluting industry showed up in our backyard, we never gave much thought to clean air and water or our peaceful neighborhood. We took it all for granted.

Share the Test Results

What statements should Beverly make when she talks about her soil test results?

Pollutants Found in Three Soil Samples in Storybook Farm’s Yard				
Chemical Name	Sample A	Sample B	Sample C	Typical US Level in soils
Chromium	43.3	86.6	40.6	40.00
Lead	23.7	23.2	14.5	10.00
Zinc	181.0	30.1	258.0	50.00

1. On average, zinc levels are _____.
2. Sample C of zinc is _____ times higher than typical U.S. soil.
3. The lead levels look lower than the others, but Samples A and B are still about _____ times higher than typical.

Data on soil results are in mg/Kg . Table provided by BREDL. BREDL staff advise using the highest level for comparison. There is a chance that a person in Storybook Farm’s backyard may be exposed to the highest level. To learn more about the dangers of exposure to chemicals, check <www.atsdr.cdc.gov>.

We Used to Take Clean Air for Granted

After many complaints by our family and others in the community, the North Carolina Division of Air Quality (NC-DAQ) set up air quality testing equipment to monitor the galvanizing emissions. The results of the air testing were “inconclusive.”

Before this polluting industry showed up in our backyard, we never gave much thought to clean air and water or our peaceful neighborhood. We took it all for granted. We were not active in environmental work or volunteer work except through our church. We didn’t pay much atten-