

Meadowbrook Environmental Testing Finds No Damage From Herbicides

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[Reprint: Prairie Village Post, April 5, 2016 – Thomas R. Buchanan referenced]

Extensive environmental testing on the Meadowbrook land set to become a new public park revealed no problematic toxin levels associated with the use of herbicides, pesticides or fungicides on the former golf course land, but did find an area of approximately one-third of an acre likely contaminated by a gas spill.

Johnson County Park and Recreation District and VanTrust Real Estate conducted environmental testing totaling approximately \$180,000, according to attorney Tom Buchanan of McDowell Rice Smith & Buchanan, who represented the parks district in the matter.

“The environmental assessment that was done was the most complete you would ever find for a transaction on a comparable piece of property in Johnson County,” Buchanan said. “Johnson County Parks and Rec took to heart the reticence expressed by members of Prairie Village’s governing body...about potential risks associated with golf courses.”

Soil testing throughout the property combined with silt testing from the ponds on the property revealed no problematic toxin levels associated with herbicides and pesticides frequently used on golf course greens.

The study did, however, find a patch of soil near an old maintenance shed where mowing equipment and storage tanks were located that showed signs of hydrocarbon contamination — likely from spilled gas. That area is located to the west of the southernmost retention pond, far from the most concentrated swath of parkland on the northern part of the property.

To remove the contamination, crews will dig up dirt over the area affected by the gas spill and replace it with fresh soil.

Buchanan stressed that both the parks district and VanTrust had gone above and beyond to provide a clear picture of the environmental status of the property.

“A \$180,000 expenditure on this exploration is an extraordinary level to try to make sure that the public interest in getting a clean park that is safe for use is met,” Buchanan said.

Johnson County Park and Recreation District Executive Director Jill Geller said the county had been satisfied with the findings and was eager to move through with the closing of the deal.

“Of the 80-plus acres we will be acquiring, there remains a very small piece of property requiring remediation,” said Jill Geller. “Overall this is a very clean piece of land.”