



**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**  
**REEF Environmental Facility**  
**Fact Sheet Update**  
*Sylacauga, Talladega County, Alabama*

**Number 5**

**January 2013**

**SITE DESCRIPTION**

The Reef LLC Facility (“the Site”) located at 71 Twin Street, Sylacauga, Alabama was a centralized industrial waste water treatment facility. The facility was permitted to accept waste water and oily waste from other industries for treatment and discharge to a public operated treatment works (POTW) in Sylacauga. Shortly after the first waste deliveries began, local and state government officials received numerous odor complaints. Subsequent assessments identified unstable conditions relating of accumulating gases (organic and hydrogen sulfide) under a tarp/liner over the biological treatment basin at the facility and an oily sheen being released from the facility as well as abandoned hazardous chemicals both on the facility grounds and in the onsite facility lab.

**RESPONSE ACTIONS  
TO DATE**

On October 1, 2012, Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) requested assistance from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) Region 4 to investigate an oily sheen on Shirtee Creek next to the Site. Further investigation lead to the discovery of the tarp that was stressed and under pressure over the two equalization basins. An EPA On-Scene-Coordinator (OSC) was dispatched to the scene. A network of absorbent booms has been placed in and around Shirtee Creek to address the unpermitted surface discharges of oily wastewater from the facility. On-scene personnel continue to monitor the area around Shirtee Creek for adverse impacts to fish and other aquatic organisms. In addition, an air scrubber system was installed to alleviate the large bubble of gases underneath the tarp covering the wastewater



basins. The scrubber system operated between October 5 and October 7, 2012 and removed approximately 170,000 cubic yards of gas from under the tarps. In October and November 2012, ADEM, EPA, and its contractors, including waste water specialists and engineers, conducted numerous tests of the waste water on the Reef Site on how to control the gas and odor evolving from the basins. On December 20, 2012, EPA and its contractors completed the first round of chemical oxidation treatment of the waste water. The treatment successfully eliminated the emission of hydrogen sulfide gas (H<sub>2</sub>S) and significantly reduced the offensive odor from the three primary waste water basins at the Site. To date, approximately 225,000 pounds of 35% hydrogen peroxide has been used in treatment on the Site.

## **NEXT STEPS**

EPA and ADEM continue ongoing operations at the Reef Environmental Site to develop an on-site system to treat and to dispose the remaining 14 million gallons of waste water. EPA will continue to treat the basins as needed to control the emissions of H<sub>2</sub>S. In January 2013, EPA and its contractors continue to remove a heavy floating sludge off of Equalization Basin Number 1 (EQ 1). EQ 1 is a three million gallon waste water basin approximately an acre in size. The decay of the sludge layer has also been a contributing source to the characteristic Reef odor. Removal of the sludge layer is scheduled for completion in January 2013, but has proven to be a labor intensive effort. There will be periodic odor releases from the Site during this operation due to the handling and occasional mixing of the sludge. However, the intensity of the odor will diminish as operations to remove the sludge near completion at the end of the month.



## **Contact Information**

**For more information or should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to phone, write or email one of the following points-of-contact:**

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**

**61 Forsyth Street, SW**

**Atlanta, GA 30303**

**EPA Community Involvement Coordinator**  
**Kerisa Coleman**  
**(404) 562-8831 or (877) 718-3752**  
[coleman.kerisa@epa.gov](mailto:coleman.kerisa@epa.gov)

**EPA On-Scene Coordinator**  
**David Andrews**  
**(404) 562-8763**  
[andrews.david@epa.gov](mailto:andrews.david@epa.gov)

**Upcoming Community Activities:**

**Public Meeting**

**Date: January 15, 2013**

**Time: 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

**Location: J. Craig Smith Community  
Center located at 2 West 8<sup>th</sup> Street,  
Sylacauga, AL**

