

EPA Emergency Response Site Update
North Salt Lake Chemicals
June 9, 2023

Safety Message

The chemicals and, in particular the large amount of mercury at the residence, could be hazardous to human health. Responders must exercise caution.

EPA's Response Team is blocking one lane of traffic in front of the residence and the sidewalk has been closed.

[Website](#)

Site Description

On May 23, 2023, Davis County Department of Health requested assistance from Utah Department of Environmental Quality (UDEQ) at a private residence in North Salt Lake, Utah. The residence contains numerous containers of hazardous chemicals that were collected by the resident over approximately 30 years. The chemicals include several gallons of elemental mercury.

UDEQ staff visited the residence and referred the incident to EPA Emergency Response which deployed a Response Team to the residence on June 5, 2023 to secure and dispose of the chemicals.

The majority of the chemicals are in the garage of the residence. Most of the containers are intact although there is significant mercury contamination in the garage.

Site Objectives

- Safety of the public and response personnel is top priority.
- Stabilize the source area to prevent the release of hazardous substances.
- Minimize or eliminate threats to human health posed by the hazardous chemicals.
- Collect, bulk and dispose of hazardous chemicals.
- Provide timely and accurate communication of response information to the public and affected stakeholders.

Operations Period Objectives

1. Continue air monitoring in and around the residence.
2. Continue to address mercury contamination in garage.
3. Continue to process chemical containers in garage.

Operations Period Accomplishments

EPA's Response Team completed its assessment of the hazardous chemicals in the garage. All chemicals have been assigned to disposal waste streams and the majority have been packaged for transport. Arrangements are being made to move the chemicals off-Site.

The Team is making every effort to decontaminate items in the garage so that they can be returned to the property owner. The process is tedious and involves using a chemical reagent to bind the mercury and/or allowing the items to vent. The items are then be screened for mercury once again before being returned to the property owner. Many items passed screening and were released today. Many items that cannot be decontaminated were also disposed of today. Beads of mercury are still being collected in the garage but their presence is greatly reduced.

Decontaminated items ready to be returned to property owner.



Items that cannot be decontaminated packaged for disposal.



The EPA Response Team is using sophisticated equipment that allows for the rapid identification of unknown chemicals. Approximately 25 unknown chemicals were identified today. The South Davis Metro Fire HazMat Team utilizes the same equipment and the HazMat Team visited the Site today and analyzed the unknown samples alongside EPA's crew using their own equipment. EPA's Response Team and the HazMat Team were able to share experience and gain practical experience working alongside each other.

EPA Team and South Davis Metro Fire analyzing unknown chemicals.

