

POLREP No. 1 - First and Final POLREP

Site Description

Ram Chemical and Supply Company is located at 4949 Greenhouse Road, Houston, Texas, and consists of a 5000 square foot warehouse providing pool chemical supplies varying from sanitizers, algaecides, and pool balance products for residential and commercial usage.

On July 11, 2009, the Texas State Operations Center (SOC) was notified of a 2 – alarm fire at the Ram Chemical and Supply Company warehouse. The Harris County Hazmat team was the initial responder to the incident. Other agencies responding to the fire included Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), and the Cy-Fair Fire Department. The fire was at the building where most of the chemicals are stored, in specific calcium hypochlorite or pool sanitizer.

Current Activities

On July 11, 2009 at approximately 17:45 hrs the Harris County Fire Hazmat responded to the fire. Harris County Fire Marshal focused on extinguishing the fire and setting up a shelter in place. Fire suppression occurred until the crews were unable to get to the fire. Approximately 350 containers of calcium hypochlorite, ranging in size between 15 and 50 pounds per container, and approximately 3600 gallons of muriatic acid were consumed during the fire.

TCEQ indicated that the Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services provided primary support for emergency response and performed air monitoring. Air monitoring indicated volatile organic carbons (VOCs) to be non-detected and the highest carbon monoxide reading was 6 ppm. The pH from the runoff was 4.5. No fish kill was immediately noted.

Ram Chemical secured the services of Oil Mop, Inc. to perform initial site cleanup by applying absorbent pads around storm water drains and setting a booms on Bear Creek. Fire fighter extinguishing foam was noted to be collected from the boom. Ram also hired Texas General Contractor to complete the cleanup and demolition efforts.

On July 13, 2009, EPA and TCEQ visited the site to observe the cleanup progress. The main building has been demolished, booms are still in place on Bear Creek as a precaution, and chemicals not impacted by the fire have been segregated on plastic sheet to be transported to another location. The site appears secured and no releases, spills or discharges were observed, but 3 dead fish were noted in Bear Creek adjacent to the site and upstream from the boom. The Texas Fish & Wildlife will inspect the site on July 14, 2009. Local police will remain on site overnight for security.

EPA re-visited the site on July 14, 2009, to discuss the remaining activities with the RP cleanup contractor. All the runoff water has been vacuumed and place in a frac tank for neutralization and final disposal. Intact but superficially damaged 1-gallon muriatic acid containers have been placed inside a bermed area to be bulked into 55-gallon poly drums for disposal or reclamation. No other chemical products related to the fire remain in the site. Shipments of new products are still arriving to the site but quickly loaded to a transport and taken to a new leased location.

Planned Removal Actions

The RP contractor will continue demolition of damaged buildings. There is a potential for contaminated runoff to be generated if a rain event occurs. The contractor has all the measures in place to protect all the drains around the site and quickly collect any residual. All generated wastes will be profiled for

disposal. EPA OSC observed that the site has been secured and there is no potential for additional releases.

Next Steps

EPA will acquire air monitoring data from HCPHES. Verify that there is no further impact to the local community and surrounding environment. Contact RP contractor how the final disposition of generated wastes is handled.

Key Issues

- Incident was not reported to the NRC. RP was asked to make a late report to the NRC.
- Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services will provide air monitoring data when compiled.