

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region II
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Friday, March 27, 2009
From: Paul L. Kahn, Michael Hoppe

To: Andrew Raddant, Department of Interior Lisa Levy, OSHA
William Molnar, Sandy Alexander Albert Greco, City of Clifton
Denise Zeno, USEPA Angela Carpenter, USEPA

Subject: Abrachem Chemical
2 Peekay Drive, Clifton, NJ
Latitude: 40.8306000
Longitude: -74.1231000

POLREP No.:	29	Site #:	A212
Reporting Period:		D.O. #:	072
Start Date:	1/2/2009	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	12/30/2008	Response Type:	Time-Critical
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:	NJR000031831	Contract #	EP-W-04-055
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

At 1615 hours on 10/29/08 EPA received a notification from the NRC that a chemical release was occurring at Abrachem Chemical, a bulk chemical packaging facility that leased a building in Clifton, Passaic County, NJ. The NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection was on-scene and requested EPAs presence.

At 1730 hours OSC Ellen Banner and OSC Paul Kahn responded to the scene. The company was found to be storing drums and bulk containers of known and unknown chemicals in 17 56-foot long intermodal shipping carriers (ISCs), stacked 3 tiers high (approx. 35 feet). Only 5 of the ISCs could be opened, and inside those it was observed that drums and bulk containers were staged behind tiers of empty poly drums, giving the impression that the ISCs were used for new drum storage. EPA observed that in the one ISC where the release originated at least one drum was leaking its contents onto a wooden pallet; strong chemical odors emanated from the open door of the ISC and were also pervasive in the general area.

The Operator of Abrachem retained the services of a remediation company, and contractor personnel were advised to lay poly sheeting and begin removing and overpacking the leaking and unknown drums that were readily accessible. Work commenced almost immediately, but at 2100 hours was halted due to lack of adequate lighting and inability to physically access the majority of the drums through the narrow doorway.

The Operator of Abrachem and the Owner of the property was issued a Field Expedient Notice, and in response the Operator stated he would initiate a removal action. When his efforts to respond to the release, and threats of a release, proved to be inadequate EPA sought voluntary access to initiate a response action. This access was denied on two occasions. On 12/4/2008 EPA issued a Unilateral Administrative Order (UAO) for access. The Operator refused to comply with the UAO and EPA referred the matter to the Department of Justice for a legal remedy. On 1/8/2009 a federal Magistrate issued an access warrant to EPA to initiate a response action at the Site.

Current Activities

During this reporting period the last box trailer was emptied and 35 pallets of old paint-related chemicals, solvent-based paint with lead and cadmium pigments, and similar dry pigments were removed and staged inside the premises. The owner of this waste material has retained a consultant who is making

arrangements with Clean Venture to ship and dispose of it. The cost for the T & D of this waste is estimated at \$36,000, which is a direct cost-savings to the government.

Plans are underway to retrieve and transport two drums of Bergerac Chemical's dry nitrocellulose to the Clean Harbors explosive materials disposal facility in Colfax LA for disposal at no cost to the government.

ERRS continues to haz-cat samples in the on-site lab. As of the date of this POLREP more than 1,300 samples have been identified using the portable Haz-Mat Command device.

Planned Removal Actions

ERRs will continue to sample and haz-cat containers of unknown chemicals. The OSCs will continue to contact companies whose chemicals are identified at the Site to make arrangements for the disposal of the chemicals at no cost to the government. RST will continue to provide printouts from Drum Trak for every chemical company having chemicals at the Site, and efforts to have them retrieve their chemicals will ramp-up to expedite the conclusion of the removal action.

The Site will be demobed for a week starting on COB April 10th. Removal activities will resume on April 20th, at which time ERRS will begin investigating possible contamination in the the two underground sumps at the Site which are believed connected to the in-house floor drain system. In addition, pre-remedial will be contacted to begin making arrangements for soil sampling in the area east of the premises where the ISCs had been staged and where numerous chemical releases had been observed.

Next Steps

Prepare the 35 + 2 pallets of Decor Inc. paint and paint-related chemicals for shipping. Complete arrangements for the T & D of the two drums of dry nitrocellulose to LA. Continue haz-cating and continue general clean up activities.

Key Issues

See above.

response.epa.gov/abrachemchemical