

**United States Environmental Protection Agency**  
**Region II**  
**POLLUTION REPORT**

**Date:** Friday, April 3, 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

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

**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 dozens of deteriorated containers have been overpacked and 3 chemical companies who have agreed to retrieve their chemicals visited the Site to inspect their drums. Decor Inc. is scheduled to have a rep on-Site on 4/3 to begin overpacking the 37 pallets of waste paint and paint

chemicals for T & D.

As depicted in the cover photo, the Passaic County Bomb Squad (PCBS) was contacted to assist in sampling one of two drums of nitrocellulose (NC). The concept was to remotely use their bomb-handling robot to acquire a sample from the drum of dry NC. Practice runs were conducted on 4/1 to determine if it was physically possible to use the robot for such a task. After 2 hours of practice it was decided that it is indeed feasible to use the robot. Actual sampling will take place on a date suitable for the PCSB. Immediately after the sampling event the two drums of nitrocellulose will be transported by Clean Harbors to its 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 1,553 containers of chemicals, comprised of totes, 55-gallon drums, other containers down to 5 gallons, supersacs, and bags have been entered into Drum Trak®. More than 1,450 samples have been identified, the majority from using the portable Haz-Mat ID Command device.

There are so many companies involved in either taking back their chemicals for reuse/recycling, or arranging for their disposal, that it is becoming time-consuming to explain the procedures involved. The OSC has put together two electronic information packets, one for companies reusing their chemicals, and one for companies who will be transporting and disposing of their chemicals. The packets contain procedural information, a Site Fact Sheet, a link to the osc.net web site, examples of a completed RCRA manifest or bill-of-lading, and directions to the Abrachem Site. Sending the appropriate e-packet to companies willing to engage in Responsible Care® saves time and has been shown to be very informative.

#### **Planned Removal Actions**

Overpacking deteriorated drums will continue. Empty metal and poly containers will be prepared for disposal, contaminated debris and wooden pallets will be consolidated for T & D, and general Site clean-up will continue. Due to excessive dust conditions at the Site, a HEPA vac will be used to clean the interior floors in all areas where drums are staged.

The Site will be demobed for a week effective COB on April 10th. Removal activities will resume at 0730 hours on April 20th.

#### **Next Steps**

Continue as above. Continue contacting chemical companies and scheduling pick-ups of their waste chemicals for disposal.

#### **Key Issues**

See above.

[response.epa.gov/abrachemchemical](https://response.epa.gov/abrachemchemical)