United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region X
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Wednesday, April 22, 2009
From: Andy Smith

Subject: Initial POLREP
Double H Pesticide Burial Site
1501 Bethany Road, Grandview, WA
Latitude: 46.2908000
Longitude: -119.9269000

POLREP No.:	1	**Site #:**	10HA
Reporting Period:	3/16/09 - 3/26/09	**D.O. #:**	
Start Date:	3/16/2009	**Response Authority:**	CERCLA
Mob Date:	3/16/2009	**Response Type:**	Emergency
Demob Date:	3/27/2009	**NPL Status:**	Non NPL
Completion Date:	9/30/2009	**Incident Category:**	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:	WAN001002790	**Contract #**	EP-S7-06-02
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

Site Location

The site is in eastern Washington near the town of Grandview. This is a rural agricultural area. The site itself is on private property next to a vineyard for Concord grapes. The site is about 0.5 acres and was secured with a fence during the response. The Potential Responsible Parties (PRP) have been identified and are cooperating by granting access.

Description of Threat

Washington State Departments of Ecology (Ecology) and Agriculture (WSDA) had initially received information that two 55-gallon drums of herbicide, as well as thirty 5-gallon containers of used oil had been buried in an excavated trench. Surface water in an irrigation ditch is present on the site but there are no residences in the immediate area. The burial was reported to have happened last October.

Based on information received, WSDA was concerned the pesticide may be a pre- and post-emergent herbicide Di-Nitro product that was marketed under the brand name Dinoseb. Dinoseb was canceled by the EPA in 1986 because it was acutely toxic and suspected of causing birth defects among other reasons.

The potential threat to the environment and human health is contamination of soil and groundwater with pesticides and other hazardous materials. The amount of material that was disposed is unknown. There are over a 100 containers that held various types of pesticides and oil. The sizes ranged from quart-sized oil containers to 35 gallon pesticide containers. The closest home is a quarter mile away and is on a drinking well.

While, no Dinoseb was found in labeled containers or in product samples, other pesticides and hazardous materials were found.

Current Activities

On Monday March 16th, an EPA On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) and EPA's Superfund Technical Assist and Response Team (START) contractors, who provide technical support to the OSC, traveled to Yakima to prepare for a briefing the next morning..

On the morning of Tuesday March 17th, Dan Heister, the EPA OSC, and START met with Gary Buckner and Lee Barigar (WSDA) and Richard Granberg, Brian Dick, Greg Bohn, and Samuel Hunn (Ecology). Afterwards they went to the property owner's residence in nearby Sunnyside to gain access to the site. The property owner referred everyone to the operator for access to the site. The property owner and the operator are considered Potential Responsible Parties (PRP). The operator met everyone at the site. The operator was told of allegation of illegal burial of hazardous waste. He denied any knowledge of the material being buried at the site, but was cooperative and signed the access agreement

to allow everyone onto the site.

The site contained an open pit approximately 12' by 12' and 8' deep. The pit was about half full of household garbage, old furniture, old electronic equipment, and various other types of debris. There was excavated soil was stockpiled adjacent to the pit. Based on numerous depressions in the ground in the area around the open excavation it appeared that there were many similar pits that had been excavated, filled and then topped off with soil.

START deployed a magnetometer to screen the area for buried metal objects. The instrument sounded frequently indicating that buried metal was ubiquitous throughout approximately a half acre area now considered to be the site. The operator acknowledged that they buried garbage there but that the appropriate Yakima County officials were aware of the activity. When asked if he had buried pesticides there he again denied it, but with the caveat that he could not control what others put in the pits.

On Wednesday, March 18th, site characterization continued. Previously stockpiled overburden soil was sampled to determine if the soil was contaminated with pesticides. The samples were delivered to the WSDA pesticide laboratory in Yakima to be screened for Dinoseb, Oryzalin and Phenoxy Acid pesticides. START brought the EPA Level-A Truck and two additional START staff to support site characterization.

On Thursday, March 19th, START mobilized a ground penetrating radar unit (GPR) and operator to the site to focus in on a specific 20' by 20' area where it was understood that drums had been buried in October 2008. The GPR operator also surveyed the area outlining with marking paint areas with subsurface anomalies which would indicate buried items.

EPA ERRS (Emergency and Rapid Response Services contract that provides removal work) would use an excavator to investigate the areas marked out by the GPR operator.

ERRS contractors began removal by moving the soil stockpile under which the drums were alleged to be buried. START collected soil samples from the stockpiled soil for additional analysis of contamination. The sample taken from the stockpile was a composite sample.

In the first test pit dug by ERRS, trash debris was found beneath 2 to 4 feet of soil and below the trash debris one small poly drum was discovered. In the second test pit, trash debris was found beneath 2 to 4 feet of soil and below the trash debris two drums were found. One of the drums had a FIFRA (Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act), approved label that identified the drum as having contained lime sulfur solution; a fungicide/insecticide. The label carried the Signal Word, Danger. START collected samples of what appeared to be product from the drums in the second test pit. In addition to the drums several oil containers were also observed to be in the pits.

START collected water samples from the surface water drainage areas.

On Friday, March 20th, ERRS excavated a third test pit where trash debris was found under 2 to 4 feet of soil and below the trash debris multiple drums were found, one of which was thought to contain the pesticide of concern, Dinoseb. START collected a sample of what appeared to be product from that drum for identification analysis. The water samples that were collected from the drainage areas and the suspected pesticide product samples were delivered to OnSite Environmental for analysis by EPA method 8151A.

A media information session was held at the site with three local TV stations and four newspapers. Representatives from Ecology, WSDA, and EPA were interviewed.

By the end of the day on Friday five large poly drums and approximately 25 crushed five-gallon containers had been discovered. Many of the smaller containers appeared to have oily residue in them and were suspected to have contained waste oil. Two of the pits had what appears to be waste oil floating on top of the ground water at the bottom of the pits.

On Saturday, March 21st, site investigation and characterization continued in the northeast part of the site. ERRS excavated the two potential burial locations to approximately 6 feet below ground surface and no pesticide containers were encountered.

START continued to characterize containers found in the excavation pits. START found 27 buried drums and containers in the third area of excavation in one burial location, some with labels identified them as pesticide containers. START collected an oil sample from the surface of the ground water in another pit that had visual oil staining of soil on the pit walls.

On Sunday, March 22nd, START characterized the 27 drums and containers removed from the third area of excavation. START sampled 30 drums and containers for hazard categorization. START received verbal results from the subcontracted lab indicating that the three product samples from Friday were not Dinoseb.

ERRS consolidated the drum staging areas into one location.

On Monday, March 23rd, site investigation and characterization continued. ERRS installed fencing around the excavated areas to secure the area for safety and security. ERRS excavated the area west of the initial excavated area of the site and no pesticide containers were observed to be buried in that location. START continued to sample drums and containers for hazard categorization. START collected 15 samples for analysis at a START subcontracted lab.

On Tuesday, March 24th, site investigation and characterization continued. ERRS moved the apple crates that were located to the west of the initial excavation area. Then ERRS dug another test pit in the location of the apple crates and no pesticide containers or household debris were found. ERRS excavated a third potential burial location in the northeast part of the site underneath a brush and debris pile. A car battery and an empty pesticide backpack sprayer were observed buried in the excavation in that location. START sampled 12 drums and containers for hazard categorization. START sent a total 21 product samples to the lab based on hazard categorization and pesticide labels on the containers.

On Wednesday, March 25th, ERRS continued to excavate but found no additional drums or containers were found. START collected 4 water samples from the pits where pesticide drums and containers were discovered during excavation. START also collected soil samples from the pits at or near the level of the ground water. ERRS estimates that there is about 400 cubic yards of overburden soil and 150 cubic yards of household garbage and debris that has been stockpiled on the site.

On Thursday, March 26th , site investigation continued. ERRS secured the drums and containers, the soil stockpiles, and the debris pile with visqueen plastic. ERRS graded the edges of the pits for safety and then demobilized from the site. START collected composite samples from the debris and soil stockpiles. Most samples were shipped to OnSite Environmental laboratory for analysis the others were shipped to Pacific Agriculture Laboratory for pesticide analysis. START handed over to the operator split samples that were collected. START secured the site and demobilized the EPA vehicles from the site.

To date, 31 five-gallon oil containers, 12 pesticide containers less than 2 gallons, 16 empty drums, and 49 thirty-gallon drums containing some product-appearing substance have been found and removed. Aerosol cans, car batteries, and quart oil containers have also been found and removed.

The sources of further contamination of ground water have been removed. EPA needed to wait on laboratory analysis to confirm the presence of product matched the labels. EPA also needed to wait on analysis of ground water and soil samples.

Next Steps

Write and Administrative Order on Consent for the PRP.

Write Action Memorandum.

Develop a schedule of work for the Action Memorandum.

Allow the PRP to begin planning for the removal of the known contaminated soil and the pesticide drums and containers on site. Characterize the groundwater contamination through installation of groundwater monitoring wells.

response.epa.gov/DoubleHPesticideBurial