

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

Date: Thursday, May 14, 2009

From: Kathy Clayton

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	Ryan Wozniak, Wisconsin Department of Health Services	John Glover, U.S. EPA R5

Subject: Initial POLREP
Columbus Chemical Industries Fire
N4335 Temkin Rd., Columbus, WI

POLREP No.:	1	Site #:	
Reporting Period:	5/11/2009-5/14/2009	D.O. #:	
Start Date:	5/12/2009	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	5/12/2009	Response Type:	Emergency
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:		Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

The Columbus Chemical Industries plant is located at N4335 Temkin Road in Columbus, Wisconsin. The plant is located near the intersection of Highway 151 and Route 73, east of the City of Columbus in Dodge County. Columbus Chemical Industries, Inc. (CCI) is a processor and packager of high purity chemicals. They specialize in acids, acid blends, and dilutions.

On May 11, 2009 at approximately 8:05 pm, the Dodge County Sheriff's Department was notified of a fire alarm at CCI. The Columbus Volunteer Fire Department arrived on scene, began fire suppression, and requested mutual aid assistance from neighboring fire departments. At approximately 8:40 pm, an explosion occurred. This prompted fire officials to cease fire suppression and establish an exclusionary zone of ½ mile radius around the plant. Prevailing winds were from the south-southwest. At approximately 9:35 pm, the Dodge County Sheriff's Department initiated a reverse 911 call to residents north of CCI advising them to shelter in place. At approximately 10:00 pm, authorities closed both STH 73 and US 151 to prevent traffic from driving thru the smoke plume.

A Unified Command was established by the Dodge County Sheriff's Office and Dodge County Emergency Management. The Dodge County Level B Hazmat Team, Madison Level A Hazmat Team, and Wisconsin National Guard 54th Civil Support Team began air modeling and air monitoring to determine the toxicity of the plume and the associated health hazards.

At approximately 1:00 am on May 12, 2009, state officials requested air monitoring assistance from U.S. EPA. OSC Clayton and START (WESTON) arrived on scene at approximately 5:00 am.

Current Activities

U.S. EPA, Civil Support Team, and Madison Fire Department conducted perimeter air monitoring in the vicinity of the site, including the residential area located southwest of the facility; a mixed residential, commercial, and agricultural area located north of the facility; and a residential and agricultural area located southeast of the facility. Perimeter air monitoring was conducted to measure acid and industrial chemicals suspected to be present at the facility, including pH, hydrogen cyanide (HCN), hydrogen sulfide (H₂S), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and particulates. Throughout the incident, air monitoring has

demonstrated that all chemicals of concern are below the applicable health standards. On May 12, 2009, the evacuation and shelter in place recommendation was lifted. Due to changing weather conditions overnight on May 12, 2009 and during the day on May 13, 2009, the precautionary measures were recommended again for the seven residences and three businesses immediately downwind of CCI.

A limited amount of runoff was released from the initial fire suppression efforts. U.S. EPA and START collected a sample of the red viscous liquid that was leaking from the facility into a drainage swale. Field screening indicated a pH of 0, indicating an acid. The sample was submitted for laboratory analysis of VOCs, SVOCs, and pH. The runoff release was traced thru the drainage ditch approximately 100 yards from the facility. Field screening of the runoff in the ditch indicated a pH of 4. Public access to the area is being restricted. CCI treated the water with lime and placed berms along the drainage ditch, Tempkin Drive, and Highway 73.

At the request of the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, U.S. EPA and START collected four wipe samples downwind of the facility and one wipe sample upwind of the facility to determine the presence of acid deposition. The samples were submitted to the Wisconsin State Lab for analysis of anions, VOCs, and metals.

Planned Removal Actions

As of 7:00 pm on May 13, 2009, the fire continued to smolder. Once it is determined safe to enter the facility, CCI and WDNR will determine the extent of contamination and assess the wastes remaining.

Next Steps

CCI's environmental consultant, BT2 of Madison, Wisconsin, will be assuming the neighborhood air monitoring, with EPA oversight. The air monitoring will continue until the fire has been extinguished and no additional threats to human health and the environment exist.

CCI will be testing their on-site groundwater monitoring wells once the fire is contained such that the wells can be safely accessed. Based on these results, WDNR will determine what additional sampling is needed.

WDNR will oversee the PRP's assessment of the wastes remaining on site when it is safe to do so.

Key Issues

- Maintain unified command structure between various responding agencies.
- Continue to evaluate health and safety as work at the site progresses.
- Public information and media inquiries.

Estimated Costs *

	Budgeted	Total To Date	Remaining	% Remaining
Extramural Costs				
Intramural Costs				
Total Site Costs	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%

* The above accounting of expenditures is an estimate based on figures known to the OSC at the time this report was written. The OSC does not necessarily receive specific figures on final payments made to any contractor(s). Other financial data which the OSC must rely upon may not be entirely up-to-date. The cost accounting provided in this report does not necessarily represent an exact monetary figure which the government may include in any claim for cost recovery.

response.epa.gov/ColumbusChemicalCompanyFire

POLREP #1 Last Updated 5/14/2009