

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
ABC Recycling - Polrep/Sitrep
Initial and Final Polrep/Sitrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region I

Subject: SITREP #1
Situation Report (Initial & Final) #1
ABC Recycling

New Bedford, MA
Latitude: 41.6642000 Longitude: -70.9500000

To:
Thru:
From: Richard Haworth, On-Scene Coordinator
Date: 8/4/2009
Reporting Period: 08/03/09 - 08/04/09

Executive Summary

3 Aug 09 - At 13:00, OSC Haworth responded to the incident where an unknown substance resulted in the hospitalization of several people at the ABC Recycling facility located at 1245 Shawmut Avenue in New Bedford, MA. The OSC integrated into the command structure, providing support in the development of air monitoring plans and tactics to address incident objectives. While the incident is summarized in three short paragraphs below, the information presented is the result of many level A entries by local responders and the first civil support team. The Level A entries were conducted between noon on Monday afternoon and 1:30 a.m. Tuesday morning, with assistance from law enforcement that provided information from employees interviewed at the hospital. While interim objectives were met, ultimately, it was never determined what was released.

A 30 percent solution of sodium chlorite is the only hazardous substance in use at the facility, and the amount present is limited to two 55-gallon drums. It is used to treat waste that arrives to avoid the accumulation of hydrogen sulfide that would otherwise naturally occur. Thus the investigation initially focused on a release of chlorine or chlorine dioxide that might be associated with the sodium chlorite. Monitoring did not support this. Drums were inspected and found not to be leaking. Also, the level of liquid inside was gauged, and it matched the level suggested would be present by facility personnel.

The idea that workers were overcome by a build up of hydrogen sulfide because of the failure to the treatment system was dismissed through air monitoring in the building, and the prior experience of responders with such incidents, who agreed that if present in concentrations sufficient to cause the symptoms observed, the victims would smell so badly of it, everyone would notice. This was not the case.

After getting access to a video tape of the operation at the facility, the reaction of an employee recorded very near a load of trash that had just been off-loaded turned the attention of the investigation to that pile of trash. After monitoring and observing the perimeter of the pile, heavy equipment available at the facility was used to pick it apart while monitoring for any release, and visually inspecting for any type of chemical or chemical containers that might be the source of the prior release that required workers to be hospitalized. Nothing was found. The emergency response was determined to be closed.

04 Aug 2009 - At 2:30, the OSC generated this report and emailed to the duty officer for distribution in the morning.

DEP will follow up in a non-emergency response capacity to assure that the company takes appropriate steps to assure treatment equipment in the building is functioning properly before returning to business as usual. OSHA and the Fire Department are expected to return to assist in this effort. No assistance from EPA's emergency responders is requested by either DEP for the local Fire Department.

Case Closed.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:
D.O. Number:

Contract Number:
Action Memo Date:

Response Authority: CERCLA	Response Type: Emergency
Response Lead: PRP	Incident Category: Removal Assessment
NPL Status: Non NPL	Operable Unit:
Mobilization Date: 8/3/2009	Start Date: 8/3/2009
Demob Date: 8/4/2009	Completion Date: 8/4/2009
CERCLIS ID:	RCRIS ID:
ERNS No.:	State Notification: DEP on site also

1.1.1 Incident Category

On-shore, non-transportation, CERCLA emergency response.

1.2 Incident Objectives

Determine the hazardous substance that caused persons to become ill.

Determine if the building is safe to re-occupy.

Convey accurate information in a timely manner to stakeholders and press.

1.3 Critical Resource Needs

Personnel in sufficient quantity to make multiple Level A entries.

Ability to perform on site analysis.

1.4 Strategic Considerations

Perform work without injury to responders.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

The response has ended.

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

The response has ended.

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

The response has ended.

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

The response has ended.

2.2.2 Issues

The response has ended.

2.3 Logistics Section

The response has ended.

2.4 Finance Section

No information available at this time.

2.5 Other Command Staff

2.5.1 Safety Officer

The response has ended.

2.6 Liaison Officer

The response has ended.

2.7 Information Officer

2.7.1 Public Information Officer

The response has ended.

2.7.2 Community Involvement Coordinator

The response has ended.

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

The response has ended.

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

The response has ended.

4. Personnel On Site

None. The response has ended.

5. Definition of Terms

EPA - Environmental Protection Agency

DEP - Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

OSC - On-Scene Coordinator

OSHA - Occupational Safety and Health Administration

6. Additional sources of information

6.1 Internet location of additional information/report

For additional information please refer to <http://epaosc.net/abc recycling>.

6.2 Reporting Schedule

No further situation reports are planned.

7. Situational Reference Materials

For additional information please refer to <http://epaosc.net/abc recycling>.