

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region IV
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Friday, October 2, 2009

From: Rick Jardine

Subject: FINAL POLREP

Brenau University Mercury Spill
615 Washington ST. SE, Gainesville, GA
Latitude: 34.3026389
Longitude: -83.8213889

POLREP No.:	5	Site #:	B422
Reporting Period:		D.O. #:	0704-F4-0067
Start Date:	8/14/2009	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	8/14/2009	Response Type:	Emergency
Demob Date:	10/2/2009	NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:	10/2/2009	Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:		Contract #	EP-S4-0704
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

On or about Monday August 10th, the removal of a mercury-containing device along with worthless debris from a science lab at Brenau University (Brenau) resulted in a release of mercury to the floor and along the route to the garbage pen at the NW corner of the building. EQ conducted the initial stabilization of much of the visible mercury.

During the morning of Monday August 17, 2009, John Keller of Brenau contacted OSC Jardine requesting that EPA conduct the appropriate removal action at the Science Building at 615 Washington Street. Mr. Keller identified timeliness and availability of resources as essential to the response since classes are scheduled to begin Monday August 24th.

Current Activities

During this reporting period, Environmental Restoration supervised the roll-off box being picked up and removed from Brenau. The box contained non-hazardous debris generated from the removal action and was emptied at the Waste Management R&B Landfill in Homer, GA.

On 02OCT09 OSC Jardine returned to the site to check the airborne mercury levels in the lab and closet, as well as the residual contamination off gassing from the mercury-contaminated articles that were removed from the classroom and closet during the removal action.

John Keller, Director of Facilities for Brenau had prepared the closet by removing the fans from the windows, closing the windows, and locking the door to the classroom. The mercury-contaminated articles had been unwrapped and stored at the maintenance shed over the past month.

The closet and classroom/lab each tested below 150 ng/m3 as measured with a Lumex mercury vapor analyzer. The readings remained stable over an hour period as demonstrated by a return visit to each.

Of the ten bags of articles, fiive bags each tested below 2000 ng/m3 (some well below) and are proposed to be returned to service in the Science department. The other five bags tested between 4,200 and over 50,000 ng/m3 and are proposed for disposal. The items proposed for disposal were contaminated by vapors of a barometer as opposed to gross mercury contamination. These items should be considered part of the non-hazardous removal generated debris as identified and analyzed during the removal action.

Planned Removal Actions

Disposal of the mercury vacuum rebound.

Next Steps

John Keller accepted the container of mercury contaminated dust and debris (vacuum rebound) that was collected from the mercury vacuum. Mr Keller expressed his intent to combine this material with thermometers and other articles gathered on campus and provide for cost efficient disposal.

response.epa.gov/BrenauUniversityMercurySpill