

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
AEP Transformer Fire - Removal Polrep
Initial and Final Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region V

Subject: **POLREP #1**
Initial and Final
AEP Transformer Fire
JWKER004
Coloma, MI
Latitude: 42.1872000 Longitude: -86.3344000

To: Jim Spiegel, North Berrien Fire
Mark Johnson, ATSDR
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Mark Horwitz, EPA
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Jason El-Zein, US EPA
Duty Officer, USCG
Jeni Miller, AEP

From: Jeffrey Kimble, OSC
Date: 12/14/2009
Reporting Period: December 12, 2009 to December 13, 2009

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	JWKER004	Contract Number:	
D.O. Number:		Action Memo Date:	
Response Authority:	CERCLA	Response Type:	Emergency
Response Lead:	EPA	Incident Category:	
NPL Status:	Non NPL	Operable Unit:	
Mobilization Date:	12/12/2009	Start Date:	12/12/2009
Demob Date:	12/13/2009	Completion Date:	12/13/2009
CERCLIS ID:		RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:		State Notification:	
FPN#:		Reimbursable Account #:	

1.1.1 Incident Category

Emergency Response

1.1.2 Site Description

On December 12, 2009, US EPA was notified that an American Electric Power (AEP) transformer was on fire in Coloma, Michigan. Local responders from the Coloma-Hagar Fire Department and AEP reported that the transformer contained 12,000 gallons of mineral oil. They also reported that the fire had subsided somewhat since it began at 1730 EST, but was still forcefully burning. The prevailing winds were out of the south, and residents along Wilson Road, north of the transformer, were advised to voluntarily evacuate or shelter in place. The Coloma-Hagar Fire Department estimated that the transformer would remain on fire for up to three days if there was no attempt to extinguish it.

1.1.2.1 Location

Coloma, Berrien County, MI

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

The smoke plume from the transformer fire could contain VOCs, CO, and particulates at levels dangerous to nearby residents.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

OSC Jeff Kimble and WESTON START representatives Jay Rauh, Shauna Ross, and Jeff Bryniarski met in Coloma at 0220 EST on December 13, 2009. OSC Kimble directed STARTs to place four Area-rae air monitoring instruments in the likely path of the smoke plume and near potentially affected residences. OSC Kimble asked START to continue monitoring the perimeter until the fire was out. He also instructed START to relocate monitors if the wind direction changed. The pertinent monitoring parameters were volatile organic carbons (VOC), carbon monoxide (CO), and particulates. The four area rae monitors were used to monitor VOC and CO. They were set to log all readings and were placed

1. At the intersection of Bundy and Wilson (NW of the transformer)
2. On Wilson where the electrical lines intersected Wilson (N of the transformer)
3. Near a residential driveway at 5206 Wilson (NE of the transformer)
4. Near the intersection of Riverside and Clymer (N of the transformer)

A personal data ram (PDR) was used to monitor for particulates, and the PDR was driven to the monitoring locations to collect readings.

By 0700, air monitoring did not indicate readings significantly elevated above background readings, and there was a shift in the prevailing wind (east). START relocated two monitors closer to the fire. The monitor from location #1 was moved to the dead end of Randall Road (E-NE of the transformer), and the monitor from location #4 was moved into the grassy field to the east of the burning transformer.

At 1230, START members Lori Kozel and Mike Browning arrived to relieve the initial START responders. After site familiarization, Rauh, Ross, and Bryniarski demobilized from the site.

At 1405, the North Berrian Fire Department extinguished the fire by applying Class A foam and water. The secondary containment surrounding the transformer prevented oil and water runoff. START remained at the site until 1800 to verify that there were no flare ups, after which they demobilized.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

Completed Emergency Response air monitoring support for North Berrien FD.

2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)

AEP is the primary PRP. OSC Kimble discussed EPA's role in air monitoring with AEP's Environmental Services staff (Ms. Jeni Miller), and offered to let AEP assume that role. After brief discussions, both parties agreed EPA would continue the air monitoring until the fire was extinguished.

Ms. Miller assured OSC Kimble that they would have their contractor, SunPro, complete any cleanup once the fire was out.

2.1.4 Progress Metrics

<i>Waste Stream</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Manifest #</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Disposal</i>

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

None.

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

None.

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

Follow up with AEP to obtain their sampling data and confirm completion of site remediation.

2.2.2 Issues

None

2.3 Logistics Section

OSC Kimble originally had three START staff on site, and downgraded to two START staff on Sunday morning.

Th ER Van was sent away on Sunday at shift change.

2.4 Finance Section

2.4.1 Narrative

EPA will track its costs and the costs of Weston Solutions for this response.

2.5 Other Command Staff

No information available at this time.

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

Fire Chief Jim Spiegel was the IC for this incident, and he incorporated EPA into his response. After EPA was briefed on the scene, the IC, a representative from AEP, and OSC Kimble all agreed on letting the fire burn to a more reasonable level where fire suppression could be effective.

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

4. Personnel On Site

Jeffrey Kimble - US EPA OSC
Jay Rauh - START
Shauna Ross - START
Jeff Bryniarski - START
Lori Kozel - START
Michael Browning - START

5. Definition of Terms

OSC = On Scene Coordinator
AEP = American Electric Power

6. Additional sources of information

6.1 Internet location of additional information/report

www.epaosc.org/AEPTransformerFire

6.2 Reporting Schedule

7. Situational Reference Materials

No information available at this time.

POLREP #1 Last Updated 12/14/2009