

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

**Date:** Monday, June 7, 2004

**From:** Davis, Garvey, Nold

**To:** Robert Sink, City of Omaha  
Gordon Andersen, Missouri River Treatment Plant  
Todd Davis, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality  
Michael Arends, Missouri River Treatment Plant  
Bahnke Donald, U.S.E.P.A.  
Bryant Burnett, U.S.E.P.A.  
Kevin Mould, U.S.E.P.A.  
Robert Stewart, Department of the Interior  
Eric Jenkins, Fed. Emerg. Mgmt. Agency

**Subject:** Omaha Lead Site  
Greater Omaha Nebraska Area, Omaha, NE  
Latitude: 41.2033000  
Longitude: -95.9308000

<b>POLREP No.:</b>	24	<b>Site #:</b>	NESFN0703481
<b>Reporting Period:</b>	June 7-12, 2004	<b>D.O. #:</b>	0006
<b>Start Date:</b>	9/25/2003	<b>Response Authority:</b>	CERCLA
<b>Mob Date:</b>	3/22/2004	<b>Response Type:</b>	Time-Critical
<b>Demob Date:</b>		<b>NPL Status:</b>	NPL
<b>Completion Date:</b>		<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>CERCLIS ID #:</b>	NESFN0703481	<b>Contract #</b>	68-S7-02-04
<b>RCRIS ID #:</b>			

#### **Site Description**

The site is located in the Omaha metropolitan area and encompasses Council Bluffs, Iowa, and Carter Lake, Iowa, and east Omaha. It is centered around downtown Omaha, Nebraska.

ASARCO Incorporated (ASARCO) operated a lead refinery at 500 Douglas Street in Omaha, Nebraska, for over 100 years beginning in the 1870s. The operation of the refinery ceased in 1997. As a routine part of the refinery operation, lead particles were emitted into the atmosphere at the refinery. In addition, the Gould Incorporated Lead Battery Recycling Plant was located at 555 Farnam Street in Omaha and was a secondary smelter of lead from discarded lead batteries. The blast furnace used to smelt the lead at the Gould plant emitted lead particles into the air from that refinery. The Gould plant closed in 1982.

Several other facilities in the Omaha area used lead in their manufacturing processes. A few of these included Carter White Lead at 21st and Locust Street which produced white lead paint bases and red lead and litharge protective coatings until 1936, Omaha Shot and Lead which later became Lawrence Shot and Lead, and then became National Lead Company which manufactured lead shot by melting pig lead, Grant Storage Battery Company, Storage Battery Factory, and Exide Corporation which manufactured lead storage batteries.

Numerous other locations in the Omaha area such as foundries, iron works, metal salvaging companies and other manufacturers used or processed lead at their facilities

#### **Current Activities**

On March 25, 2004, an Action Memorandum Amendment was signed. This amendment changes the scope of work to include daycare facilities and elevated blood levels (EBLs) that were previously addressed under the first action memorandum, however, still addresses highly contaminated properties with lead soil concentrations of 1,200 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg) or greater.

Continued activities are being centralized from the Missouri River Treatment Plant located at 5600 S 10th Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68107-3501. The city of Omaha has partnered with the EPA to allow the use of a portion of the facility.

There were 9 properties excavated, 7 back filled and 9 sodded during this reporting period. Progress was

delayed due to one yard that required hand digging. So far during this phase of the time-critical removal action (phase III), there have been a total of 95 properties excavated, 92 backfilled, and 86 sodded.

A test plot area, measuring approximately 50 by 50 feet square, was excavated on the waste water treatment plant grounds to evaluate the viability of Hydroseed application. The test area was backfilled with the same soil material used on residential properties. A spray-on grass seed mixture was then applied over the surface. The area will be watered daily, and its progress monitored.

### **Planned Removal Actions**

Continued prioritization will be given to EBLs, day care facilities, and highly contaminated properties where children seven years of age or younger live. The majority of these higher priority locations have been completed, therefore, geographic groupings of properties will now be implemented.

There are currently 23 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) contractor personnel working extended work hours, 6 days a week. The breakdown of personnel is comprised of two excavation crews and two backfill crews. There is also a "punch list crew" that follows behind the other work teams to re-install fences and other needed repairs. Then, a local sod subcontractor lays/install new sod on the properties. A few of the final steps include having the sod watered by the EPA for a two week period. At that point, the property owner is provided with an instruction sheet (bilingual) that explains future care steps concerning the sod, and is encouraged to take over the responsibilities of care.

### **Next Steps**

The next planned break is scheduled for 5:00 p.m. on June 18, 2004, and the crew will return at 1:00 p.m. on June 21, 2004.

### **Key Issues**

There is a list of 570 properties, with greater than 1,200 parts per million (ppm) lead, that is currently being prioritized for this phase of the project. At this point, many of these properties have been completed during phase III of the project.

Any additional EBLs or day cares (affecting children), once received are receiving the highest priority.

After those prioritized properties have been cleaned up, geographic locations will be utilized to maximize available resources concerning the greater than 1,200 ppm lead properties. Sometimes there are difficulties encountered when attempting to contact property owners for scheduling, however, diligent efforts toward this goal are maintained.

[response.epa.gov/OmahaLeadPhaseIV](http://response.epa.gov/OmahaLeadPhaseIV)