

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
Biotech Industries - Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region IV

Subject: POLREP #2
Biotech Industries

Newton, NC
Latitude: 35.6140810 Longitude: -81.3654540

To:
From: Kenneth Rhame, OSC
Date: 2/1/2011
Reporting Period:

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	B4E3	Contract Number:	
D.O. Number:		Action Memo Date:	
Response Authority:	CERCLA	Response Type:	Emergency
Response Lead:	PRP	Incident Category:	Removal Action
NPL Status:	Non NPL	Operable Unit:	
Mobilization Date:	1/24/2011	Start Date:	1/24/2011
Demob Date:		Completion Date:	
CERCLIS ID:		RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:		State Notification:	
FPN#:		Reimbursable Account #:	

1.1.1 Incident Category

CERCLA-Emergency Assessment

1.1.2 Site Description

Biotech Industries is an active chemical distribution facility that provides and blends chemicals for pools, wood bleaching, textiles and other applications. The operation is housed in a 100,000 square foot building approximately 600 feet from Jacobs Fork Middle School and 1,000 feet from Fred T. Foard High School.

1.1.2.1 Location

Biotech Industries is located at 3561 Plateau Road, Newton, Catawba County, NC28658.

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

NC DENR requested EPA assistance after performing a routine inspection of Biotech Industries. EPA, DENR and START performed a walkthrough and assessment on 1/24/2011. EPA observed hundreds of drums in the warehouse section of the facility. Many drums were labeled corrosive, flammable, oxidizer, toxic, etc, some drums were unlabeled. A large number of drums were rusted, dented, punctured or otherwise compromised. EPA observed drums with material leaking onto the floor. Drums contained compounds such as sodium hydroxide, sodium hypochlorite, acetone and various alcohols. EPA observed a drum containing several buckets which contained mercury switches. Drums containing various chemicals were not segregated by hazard class with flammables being located directly next to oxidizers and corrosives. Due to the instability of the site (leaking drums, incompatible materials) and proximity to school, EPA initiated a Emergency Response Action.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

EPA observed hundreds containing hazardous substances including flammables, oxidizers, toxics, etc. START performed air monitoring with at TVA-1000 and obtained PID reading of over 800 ppm when uncapping an unlabeled drum. EPA observed drums with a white crystallized substance covering the top and part of the side. Many drums are compromised in various ways and some are leaking onto the floor. One drum contains several buckets containing mercury switches.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

NC DENR requested EPA assistance after performing a routine inspection of Biotech Industries. EPA, DENR and START performed a walkthrough and assessment on 1/24/2011. EPA observed hundreds of drums in the warehouse section of the facility. Many drums were labeled corrosive, flammable, oxidizer, toxic, etc, some drums were unlabeled. A large number of drums were rusted, dented, punctured or otherwise compromised. EPA observed drums with material leaking onto the floor. Drums contained compounds such as sodium hydroxide, sodium hypochlorite, acetone and various alcohols. EPA observed a

drum containing several buckets which contained mercury switches. Drums containing various chemicals were not segregated by hazard class with flammables being located directly next to corrosives. The property is located within 1000 feet of a middle school and a high school. The property owner maintained that he received the material from various business and was paid for disposal. He claims that he intends to either sell or recycle the majority of the material and consolidate and dispose of the rest. Biotech Industries is the consolidation of S&W Chemicals and Catawba Chemicals, both of which were owned by the owner of Biotech.

EPA has activated US Coast Guard as OSC representatives. Two Coast Guardsmen are now on site and are actively coordinating site activities.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

EPA performed an assessment of the site and spoke with the owner regarding site stabilization. Due to the instability of the site (leaking drums, incompatible materials) and proximity to school, EPA initiated a Emergency Response Action.

Southern Logistics has segregated most of the incompatible materials and contained all leaking and unstable drums. Drums have been moved to the following segregated staging areas. Caustics, acids, flammables, oxidizers and acids Southern Logistics has also removed several drums of various flammable compounds from a trailer adjoining the main Biotech warehouse. Several rusted and unstable drums of flammables were pumped into new drums and moved to the flammable staging area. Air monitoring indicated levels averaging 300 ppm during the transfer of the flammable material. All workers were in respiratory protection.

Due to high particulate levels in work areas the site warehouse has been upgraded to level C PPE. Engineering controls including sweeping and vacuuming dirt and opening doors to increase ventilation have been implemented. The engineering controls have successfully reduced the amount of visible particulates in work areas.

OTIE START has performed air monitoring daily throughout site stabilization activities. Air monitoring has included PID/FID, CO, LEL, H2S, O2, Cl2 and various Drager tubes. No readings were obtained above TWA with the exception of brief elevated levels of CO while using a fork lift in a poorly ventilated area. An intrinsically safe fan was brought in from the local fire department to ventilate the area.

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

Biotech Industries is the PRP. The president of Biotech signed an Access Agreement and Notice of Federal Interest. Biotech has agreed to fund the site stabilization activities and has contracted Southern Logistics to perform the work. The work will include properly containerizing all hazardous and non-hazardous materials which are in compromised containers based on visual inspection, segregating all materials based on compatibility and providing an inventory of all hazardous and non-hazardous materials on site.

2.1.4 Progress Metrics

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

EPA will conduct oversight of the PRP contractor until the work is completed to satisfaction. START contractor Oneida Total Integrated Enterprises (OTIE) will conduct oversight.

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

2.2.2 Issues

2.3 Logistics Section

No information available at this time.

2.4 Finance Section

No information available at this time.

2.5 Other Command Staff

No information available at this time.

3. Participating Entities

No information available at this time.

4. Personnel On Site

US EPA
NC DENR-RCRA
Catawba County Fire Marshal
Catawba County Emergency Management
START

5. Definition of Terms

No information available at this time.

6. Additional sources of information

No information available at this time.

7. Situational Reference Materials

No information available at this time.