

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



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region I

Subject: POLREP #1
Initial and Final
Seekonk Mill Fire

Seekonk, MA
Latitude: 41.8949566 Longitude: -71.3282732

To:
From: Elise Jakabhazy, On-Scene Coordinator
Date: 5/29/2012
Reporting Period: 05/01/2012 - 05/29/2012

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	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: 5/1/2012	Start Date: 5/1/2012
Demob Date: 5/2/2012	Completion Date: 5/4/2012
CERCLIS ID:	RCRIS ID:
ERNS No.:	State Notification:
FPN#:	Reimbursable Account #:

1.1.1 Incident Category

CERCLA Incident Category: Inactive Production Facility

1.1.2 Site Description

The Site is located in a mixed residential and industrial use area, and is bordered to the north by the Ten Mile River; to the east by residences and the Ten Mile River Reservoir; to the south by residences and the Memorial Baptist Church; and to the west by forested area. The Site consists of a 105,000-square-foot abandoned industrial building that is currently owned by ROC Realty Corp. The building was condemned in January 2009, after a section of the roof had collapsed. From an unknown time until 1945, the building was utilized in the manufacture of tennis rackets. From 1945 to 1980, Attleboro Dyeing and Finishing Company operated in the building. Other former occupants of the building prior to 2009 included the following: GHP Associates, National Environmental Systems, Martell's Metal Works, Mike's Machine, Grinnell Cabinet Makers, Walsh Electric, and Hillman Enterprises.

1.1.2.1 Location

The Site is located at 36 Maple Street, Seekonk, Bristol County, Massachusetts.

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

On 1 May 2012, Seekonk fire response personnel were called to the scene of a large fire located in the northern area of the building. EPA requested START assistance in conducting air monitoring support as well as other response activities as requested by EPA OSC Elise Jakabházy.

- At the Site, there were two former lagoons that were already part of an existing environmental monitoring and investigation program.
- Fire fighting run-off combined with the torrential rain were rapidly filling the lagoons and discharging into the Ten Mile River.
- The building sat directly adjacent to the Ten Mile River, allowing for little to no access to intercept or capture run-off prior to flowing into the river.
- The building was not 100% free and clear of materials prior to the fire, and paint cans were heard and seen exploding during the fire fighting activities causing colorful fire and smoke, periodically.
- The age of the building also caused concern to MassDEP and EPA due for the potential for

asbestos, PCBs, and mercury from building materials entering the water or air.

- Historic operations, as well as common mill building materials also could have released volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and/or semi-volatile organic compounds (sVOCs) into the air and/or water.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

Mass DEP contacted EPA at 0835 hrs on 1 May 2012 regarding a large fire at an abandoned 105,000 square foot mill building(former Attleboro Dyeing and Finishing Company) located on Maple Avenue in Seekonk, Bristol County, MA.

OSC Phone Duty Officer dispatched OSC Elise Jakabházy to the scene with five START personnel equipped to provide air monitoring and environmental sampling support.

By 1015 hrs, EPA entered into a Unified Command with Mass DEP, RI DEM, Seekonk Fire and HazMAT, and Mass Fire Services Special Operations. At 1030 hrs, OSC Sherry Banks arrived on-scene to support OSC Jakabházy.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

May 1, 2012 - May 2, 2012, EPA worked with Seekonk Fire personnel responding to the fire to monitor air quality issues and sampling for any potential environmental contamination to the Ten Mile River and the soils adjacent to the river caused by the fire (and fire-fighting activities).

Since DataRams could not be deployed due to precipitation; Draeger Tubes were deployed for air sampling within the smoke plume. Cyanide, hydrocyanic acid, nitric acid, sulfuric acid, and hydrochloric acid tubes were deployed with a Draeger Quantimeter. These four colorimetric tubes showed no discernable color change.

Between 14:30 hours and 15:15 hours, three AreaRAE units were around the burning factory and in-between the factory and the Incident Command Post. During air monitoring activities, the AreaRAE units recorded the following parameters (with maximum concentration in parentheses): carbon monoxide (CO) [55.6 parts per million (ppm)]; VOC (64.7 ppm); hydrogen sulfide (H2S) (0.6 ppm); LEL (0.0%); and oxygen (O2) (20.9%).

Surface water from fire fighting run-off was collected and analyzed for VOCs, sVOCs, total metals and cyanide. These samples were sent to EPA's New England Regional Laboratory (NERL) for analysis.

On May 2, 2012, asbestos-containing material (ACM) samples were taken throughout the building in likely locations (pipe wrap, roofing material, insulation, etc.). ACM samples were sent to NERL to be analyzed via polarized light microscopy (PLM). Seven surface soil samples adjacent to the Ten Mile River were also collected to determine if any contamination was deposited during the fire. These VOC, sVOC, PCB, and total metal samples were packaged and sent to NERL for analysis.

All environmental results can be found at www.epaosc.net/seekonkmillfire in the After Action Report.

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

EPA worked with the Town of Seekonk to discuss potential options for securing the property in the absence of a viable PRP. Seekonk is pursuing an EPA Brownfields Grant to address the Site cleanup.

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

N/A

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

N/A

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

Refer the Town of Seekonk to the EPA Brownfields and Massachusetts Brownfields program(s) to determine appropriate next steps. Limited and isolated environmental contamination did not warrant a time-critical EPA removal action to be performed.

2.2.2 Issues

On May 1, 2012 at approximately 16:00 hours, the Exclusion Zone (EZ) was evacuated due to a ruptured gas main. According to the Seekonk Fire Department, a natural gas line was ruptured during demolition of a portion of the building. Although Unified Command had previously confirmed with all of the local utility companies that services to the building were definitively terminated, Columbia Gas later informed Unified Command that they were completely unaware that the 8-inch gas main even existed (and it was not shown on any of their drawings). A loud hissing noise, caused by the gas main leak, could be heard throughout the Exclusion Zone. EPA assisted the Fire Department by continuing to monitor the lower explosivity limits (LEL) using the AreaRAE units that were trapped in the EZ. One AreaRAE unit was utilized by firefighting

personnel, as they worked to stop the natural gas leak

Fortunately, at the beginning of the response during an initial site walk and recon of the scene, the EPA OSCs had made a health and safety decision precluding EPA's contractors from walking or working within the debris fall-zone of an unsupported outer cynderblock wall. This same wall collapsed when the gas main ruptured.

2.3 Logistics Section

EPA:

6 Motorola HT1250 Radios
Draeger Quantimeter & colorimetric tubes
AreaRae with base computer
DataRams (unused) with VIPER system (also unused due to precipitation)
START vehicles

OTHERS:

Massachusetts Department of Fire Services - Command Post & Rehab Unit
Providence Canteen

2.4 Finance Section

No information available at this time.

2.5 Other Command Staff

2.5.1 Safety Officer

OSC Jakabhazy
OSC Sherry Banks, Assistant

2.5.2 Liaison Officer

OSC Jakabhazy
OSC Sherry Banks, Assistant

2.5.3 Information Officer

OSC Jakabhazy
OSC Sherry Banks, Assistant

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

Seekonk Fire Department
Massachusetts Department of Fire Services
Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
U.S. EPA Region 1

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Seekonk Police Department
United States Coast Guard
Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

4. Personnel On Site

2 EPA OSCs
5 START
2 MassDEP
1 RIDEM
2 USCG
4 Alarm - Seekonk FD

5. Definition of Terms

N/A

6. Additional sources of information

Additional information can be found at www.epaosc.net/seekonkmillfire , including analytical reports and the After Action Report.

7. Situational Reference Materials

N/A