

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

Date: Friday, October 29, 2004
From: Gary Lipson

Subject: First and Final
Pleasant Street Mercury Site
180 - 226 Pleasant Street, Pawtucket, RI
Latitude: 41.8720000
Longitude: -71.3850000

POLREP No.:	1	Site #:	1143
Reporting Period:		D.O. #:	
Start Date:	10/22/2004	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	10/23/2004	Response Type:	Emergency
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Assessment
CERCLIS ID #:		Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

The site consists of five apartment buildings at 180, 196, 206, 216, and 226 Pleasant Street in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, a common parking lot area, and a detached maintenance building, collectively known as Lawn Terrace Apartments. Three of the buildings contain 12 apartments, the fourth contains 11 apartments and a common laundry room, and the fifth building contains 6 apartments. Each building has a basement and three floors.

Lawn Terrace is bordered by Pleasant Street and residences to the west; Taft Street, a public parking area, a public dock, and the Blackstone River to the east; residences to the south, and Division Street and access ramps to I-95 to the north.

This site is within an environmental justice area and according to the 2000 census, approximately 7,500 people live within a ½ mile radius.

Current Activities

Sometime near the end of September 2004, four individuals broke into a building owned by the New England Gas Company in Pawtucket, Rhode Island which housed liquid mercury being collected from gas regulators for either reclamation or disposal. At least one container was broken in the building resulting in mercury on the floor. An unknown amount was taken back to an apartment complex where two of the individuals lived. On October 22, 2004, mercury was discovered in the parking lot of the complex, prompting an immediate response from local and state officials and representatives of the gas company and their contractors. Areas where there was visible mercury in the parking lot were immediately cordoned off and the mercury was removed by a licensed cleanup contractor. The building where the individuals lived was monitored for mercury and due to elevated levels in the indoor air, residents of the building were summarily relocated to a nearby hotel.

On October 23, 2004, EPA and their Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team (START) contractor were on-scene to assist the RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM) in monitoring the remaining four buildings in the complex. Due to elevated levels, the residents of one of those buildings were relocated that day. Levels in the other three buildings were in a number of instances higher than the recommended action level for indoor residential air (1 microgram per cubic meter), but substantially less than the other two buildings. The contractor for the gas company confirmed those results the following day, October 24. Consensus was reached among the responding agencies that the residents from the remaining apartments would also be relocated. That was accomplished on Monday, October, 25, 2004, bringing the total of evacuated apartment units to 53.

Relocated residents of the apartments are being allowed to return to their apartments and retrieve personal belongings (clothing, medicines, toys, etc.) providing the items are monitored for residual mercury contamination prior to leaving the site.

The New England Gas Company has assumed full responsibility and is cooperating fully and cooperatively. Their contractors have been assessing and, if necessary, remediating all of the outlying elements including schools, school busses, personal vehicles and the living spaces of any family members or friends who might have been visiting any of the apartments. The gas company is also working with a number of human services organizations to house, feed, and clothe the relocated individuals and to appropriately deal with their ancillary needs.

Planned Removal Actions

New England Gas Company has tasked their consultants with preparing an assessment and remediation plan (the plan) for the apartment complex. The DEM, EPA Region 1, the EPA Environmental Response Team (ERT) out of Edison, NJ, and representatives of the Agency of Toxic Substances Disease Registry (ATSDR) are reviewing the plan prior to its implementation.

Next Steps

Once the plan has been reviewed and signed off by the appropriate parties, the cleanup contractor, consultants, and industrial hygienists hired by New England Gas will begin their assessment and remediation of the apartment complex.

Estimated Costs *

	Budgeted	Total To Date	Remaining	% Remaining
Extramural Costs				
Intramural Costs				
Total Site Costs	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%

* The above accounting of expenditures is an estimate based on figures known to the OSC at the time this report was written. The OSC does not necessarily receive specific figures on final payments made to any contractor(s). Other financial data which the OSC must rely upon may not be entirely up-to-date. The cost accounting provided in this report does not necessarily represent an exact monetary figure which the government may include in any claim for cost recovery.

response.epa.gov/PleasantStreetMercury

POLREP #1 Last Updated 2/28/2006