

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
Crowson Avenue Mercury Spill - Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region III

Subject: POLREP #3
Cleanup Continues
Crowson Avenue Mercury Spill
A3VG
Baltimore, MD
Latitude: 39.3518595 Longitude: -76.6108507

To:
From: Gregory Ham, On Scene Coordinator
Date: 2/28/2013
Reporting Period: 2/9 - 2/28/13

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	A3VG	Contract Number:	
D.O. Number:		Action Memo Date:	1/29/2013
Response Authority:	CERCLA	Response Type:	Time-Critical
Response Lead:	EPA	Incident Category:	Removal Action
NPL Status:	Non NPL	Operable Unit:	
Mobilization Date:	2/4/2013	Start Date:	1/4/2013
Demob Date:		Completion Date:	
CERCLIS ID:		RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:		State Notification:	
FPN#:		Reimbursable Account #:	

1.1.1 Incident Category

Removal action.

1.1.2 Site Description

This site includes a residential property that became contaminated with mercury on or about September 27, 2012 after a plumber removed an expansion tank from the second floor of the house, and carried it down the steps and out the front door. There was mercury contamination in the closet from which the tank was removed, in the second floor hallway, on the steps going down to the first floor, and in the first floor entranceway. There was also contamination in the basement, where the plumbers removed a section of pipe that had been connected to the expansion tank. This was evidenced by elevated mercury readings in these areas and visible beads of mercury in cracks on the floor and in the section of pipe that remained in the basement. After removing it from the house, the plumbers placed the tank on the ground in the front yard, contaminating this area as well. They then loaded the tank into one of their vehicles and removed it from the property. Once the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) was notified of the situation by the homeowner, an MDE representative contacted the plumbers, and took custody of the tank (and contaminated clothing that the plumbers had worn). The site includes the residential property as well as all locations to which mercury from the residential property has migrated or otherwise come to be located.

1.1.2.1 Location

The property is located on Crowson Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland. It is located in a residential neighborhood.

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

An unknown quantity of mercury was spilled in the house during removal of an expansion tank on the second floor that at some time in the past was part of the home heating system. It was no longer in use.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

Elevated levels of mercury were observed in the residence. Levels up to 94.5 micrograms per cubic meter were observed in the room from which the expansion tank was removed. Visible beads of mercury were observed in the second floor room, on the steps leading to the first floor, and in the basement.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

The MDE requested EPA assistance. The homeowner also requested EPA assistance.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

On January 4, 2013, On Scene Coordinator (OSC) Gregory Ham, with contractor support and an MDE representative, conducted a removal site evaluation of the property. Based on the observations during the January 4th evaluation, an Action Memorandum was signed on January 29, 2013 authorizing a removal

action at the site due to the threat caused by the release of mercury. On February 4, 2013, EPA mobilized to the site with cleanup contractors and a technical support contractor to begin cleanup of the property. The contaminated areas have been vacuumed and had mercury absorbing solution applied several times. This process was repeated until the vapor levels in the house were determined to be acceptable at the appropriate temperature range. A portion of the hardwood flooring had to be removed due to mercury contamination. (See previous Polreps for details about the cleanup). In addition, elevated mercury vapor readings were observed at the drain of the basement laundry sink. In order to investigate these readings, the sink trap and piping were removed. Mercury beads were observed in the cracks in the piping, and between the piping and a rubber coupling connecting the drain pipes. Therefore, the entire sink and piping leading to the waste pipe were removed, and a new sink, trap, and drain pipe were installed.

Mercury vapor readings taken throughout the house with a mercury vapor meter indicated that mercury vapor levels had reached an acceptable level. Therefore, on Thursday, 2/21/13, air sampling in accordance with NIOSH method 6009 was conducted at eight locations throughout the house. Preliminary results from this sampling indicate that all areas of the house are below the mercury vapor level that is considered acceptable for residential properties (1 microgram per cubic meter). Once this data is validated, it will be posted to the website for this site.

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

The agency is gathering information on PRPs and will follow up as necessary.

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

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

Validation of the air sampling data, restoration of the floor in the second floor closet, removal and proper disposal of wastes (including soils from a small area of the front yard).

2.2.2 Issues

There have been no issues to date.

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

2.5.1 Safety Officer

No safety issues reported to date.

2.5.2 Liaison Officer

2.5.3 Information Officer

A fact sheet was developed and distributed to the neighborhood on February 11, 2013, explaining the actions at the site, and providing information about mercury contamination.

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Maryland Department of the Environment, USEPA

4. Personnel On Site

For most of the weeks of February 11 and 18, 2013, OSC Ham and 4 EPA contractors were onsite. On February 21, two additional START contractors were onsite to conduct the air sampling.

5. Definition of Terms

No information available at this time.

6. Additional sources of information

6.1 Internet location of additional information/report

www.epaosc.org/crowsonavehg

6.2 Reporting Schedule

Polreps will be filed approximately weekly.

7. Situational Reference Materials

1. Chemical-Specific Health Consultation for Joint EPA/ATSDR National Mercury Cleanup Policy Workgroup
Action Levels For Elemental Mercury Spills March 22, 2012

2.ATSDR Record of Activity, Technical Assist, January 22, 2013.