

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
Samoa Pulp Mill - Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region IX

Subject: POLREP #4
Samoa Pulp Mill

Samoa, CA
Latitude: 40.8049600 Longitude: -124.1933100

To: Harry Allen, EPA Region 9
Peter Guria, EPA Region 9
Dan Meer, EPA Region 9

From: Steve Calanog, OSC

Date: 11/21/2013

Reporting Period: Week of 11/18/13

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	A949	Contract Number:	EP-S9-12-01
D.O. Number:		Action Memo Date:	11/4/2013
Response Authority:	CERCLA	Response Type:	Emergency
Response Lead:	EPA	Incident Category:	Removal Action
NPL Status:	Non NPL	Operable Unit:	
Mobilization Date:	9/30/2013	Start Date:	10/1/2013
Demob Date:		Completion Date:	
CERCLIS ID:		RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:		State Notification:	
FPN#:		Reimbursable Account #:	

1.1.1 Incident Category

Emergency Response

1.1.2 Site Description

The Samoa Pulp Mill Site is a 70 acre former industrial pulp manufacturing facility. The pulp mill was constructed in 1963 by Georgia Pacific. In the early 1970's Louisiana Pacific acquired and ran the facility until 1990. From 1990 until 2008 various smaller ownership groups owned and operated the facility. The last operating owner of the facility was the Evergreen Pulp Company which ran the facility until 2008. Evergreen experienced financial difficulties and "walked away" from the mill site without properly closing operations. Sometime in 2009 a venture group called Freshwater Tissue Company purchased the facility site with intent of converting to a tissue mill. This quickly failed to reach fruition and Freshwater began scraping the facility and consolidating hazardous waste. In August of 2013 Freshwater Tissue Company sold the facility to the Humboldt Bay Harbor District (aka - Port Authority). The facility is currently staffed with 2 part-time Humboldt Bay Harbor District employees.

1.1.2.1 Location

The Samoa Pulp Mill Site is located within Humboldt County in Samoa, CA. The Site is approximately 70 acres of industrial pulp processing operations and is situated on the North Spit of Humboldt Bay. The facility is on the shore line of Humboldt Bay and has an industrial wharf on the Bay. The Pacific Ocean is located within 800 yds to the west of the facility.

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

The facility has approximately 30 tanks which contain 4 million gallons of highly caustic liquids (pH greater than 13), 10k gallons of acids (pH less than 1), 3,000 tons of corrosive sludges in uncontained areas, approximately 3k gallons of turpentine, several laboratories with approximately 1000 containers of a wide range of chemicals in various states of stability, and several thousand containers of various types (i.e., compressed gas cylinders, paints/thinners, mercury containing gauges and equipment).

EPA assessment has determined that almost all tanks are leaking or failing. Several of the tanks pose an immediate risk to overflowing due to rainwater accumulation. Several of the tanks which currently hold pulping liquors are not designed to store caustic liquids. Laboratory chemicals are stored improperly and/or are reacting. Rain is exacerbating runoff on-going discharge risks to Humboldt Bay.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

In August, 2013, the Humboldt Bay Harbor District requested OSC Calanog to conduct a preliminary assessment of the hazardous materials which remained at the facility. What remains at the facility are approximately 30 large aboveground storage tanks which contain approximately 4 million gallons of pulping liquors, a caustic liquid with a pH of 13 or greater, approximately 10,000 gallons of acids (primarily sulphuric), and over 3,000 tons of corrosive sludges. Many of the tanks are leaking material and are in various states of decay. Further many of the tank roofs leak rain water and are at their capacity.

Subsequent assessment during the week of September 23rd, 2013, EPA determined that 2 of the large aboveground storage tanks were at capacity and threatened to overflow and/or fail completely. OSC Calanog exercised his emergency response warrant to initiate an action to stabilize the site with the primary objective of removing product from 2 tanks which were threatened to overflow.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

Beginning the week of November 18, 2013, the EPA, USCG PST, START, and ERRS personnel remobilized to the Samoa Pulp Mill Site to begin the design and construction of the pulping liquor pipeline. This pipeline will connect 10 large above ground storage tanks that contain the pulping liquors and through a series of hydraulically driven pumps transport the liquors approximately 3,000 feet to the wharf where it can safely be loaded onto a chemical barge. The pipeline will be constructed of 6-inch HDPE pipe and be valved to load discrete loads of black, white, and green liquors at the times when they will be removed. Pipeline construction at the Samoa Pulp Mill is anticipated to take approximately 3 weeks.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

11/18-21/13 - EPA, START, ERRS, and the USCG PST mobilized to the Samoa Pulp Mill Site. Equipment and materials begin to arrive. ERRS, START, and USCG PST begin pipeline design assessment and specification requirements. Over 4,000 feet of 6-inch pipe, valves, and flanges have been delivered to the sight and the welding and construction has begun.

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

EPA has been in discussions with Humboldt Bay Harbor District with regards to their responsibility as the current owner. Verbal notice has been provided by the OSC to the Humboldt Bay Harbor District. EPA civil investigators have been engaged in an investigation and assessment with regards to the responsibility of previous owners (e.g., Evergreen Pulp Company).

EPA civil and criminal investigators have initiated their investigation.

2.1.4 Progress Metrics

<i>Waste Stream</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Manifest #</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Disposal</i>
Caustic liquids	liquids	4m gallons			
Acids	liquids	10k gallons			
Corrosive sludges	semi-solids	3k gallons			
Turpentine	liquids	3k gallons			
Lab Chemicals	various	~2k containers			
"HHW" type	various	~2k containers			
Hg	liquids	Unk at this time			
Waste oils	liquids	~2k gallons			

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

Current activities planned are to complete and test the caustic loading pipeline at the Samoa Pulp Mill facility. It is anticipated that this work will be completed by the end of the first week of December.

EPA, USCG, START, ERRS currently anticipate travelling up to Longview, WA to construct an off-loading pipeline at the receiving facility. It is expected to take approximately 2 weeks to complete the pipeline at the Longview facility.

All resources will demobilize over the Christmas and New Years holidays.

EPA anticipates the first barge loading to occur by mid-January.

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

During the next three weeks work will continue until completion on the pipeline at the Samoa Pulp Mill facility.

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

EPA and the Humboldt Bay Harbor District is currently in discussions with the Longview Fiber Paper Mill in Longview, WA to finalize an agreement and plan to send the pulping liquors to that facility.

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

3.1 Unified Command

Humboldt Bay Harbor District

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Humboldt County Department of Health
Samoa Fire Department
Humboldt Bay Fire District
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
California Department of Toxics and Substance Control
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
United States Coast Guard - Sector San Francisco

4. Personnel On Site

EPA OSC - 1
START - 1
ERRS - 8
USCG PST - 3

Humboldt Bay Harbor District - 3

5. Definition of Terms

Pulping liquor is a caustic liquid, primarily sodium hydroxide, that is used in the kraft paper mill process to extract pulp from the wood. The pH for all the liquors range greater than pH 13.

6. Additional sources of information

No information available at this time.

7. Situational Reference Materials

No information available at this time.