

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



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region IX

Subject: POLREP #6
Progress
Samoa Pulp Mill

Samoa, CA
Latitude: 40.8049600 Longitude: -124.1933100

To: Harry Allen, EPA Region 9
Peter Guria, EPA Region 9
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From: Christopher Weden, OSC

Date: 2/27/2014

Reporting Period: 12/7/2013 - 2/28/2014

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	A949	Contract Number:	EP-S9-12-01
D.O. Number:	0937	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:	11/11/2014
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 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 3-4 million gallons of highly caustic liquids (pH greater than 13), 10,000 gallons of acids (pH less than 1), 3,000 tons of corrosive sludges in uncontained areas, approximately 3000 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 determined that almost all tanks were leaking or failing. Several of the tanks posed an immediate risk

of overflowing due to rainwater accumulation. Several of the tanks which currently hold pulping liquors are not designed to store caustic liquids. Laboratory chemicals were 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 above-ground storage tanks which contain approximately 3-4 million gallons of pulping liquors, a caustic liquid with a pH of 13 or greater, approximately 10,000 gallons of acids (primarily sulfuric), 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 above-ground 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

During this reporting period, EPA, in conjunction with the Humboldt Bay Harbor District (HBHD), has pursued options for transporting the abandoned pulp liquors to an active pulp mill Kapstone Paper Company (Kapstone) in Longview, WA for reuse. With no usable rail lines in Humboldt County, transport to Kapstone would be either by barge or by vacuum truck. Initially the barge option was presented as the safest and most cost effective option. Over the course of the past three months, EPA has pursued this option, coordinating with the U.S. Coast Guard, Washington Department of Ecology, the Port of Longview, Kapstone, and several nongovernmental organizations and Indian Tribes..

Until recently, the barge option was favored although the first barge company proposed, failed to meet required safety certification. A second barge company was considered, unfortunately, this week proved to be not cost effective.

EPA is now planning to transport the pulp liquors for reuse via vacuum truck. The OSCs has will be meeting with Kapstone next week to coordinate this change.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

2/24-28/14 - ERRS contractors and members of the USCG Pacific Strike Team loaded six vacuum trucks with black, green, and white liquors (two vacuum trucks of each, 4,200 gallons per truck) for transport to the Kapstone. This will allow Kapstone to perform a large-scale compatibility assessment of the liquors. Pending successful process of these truck loads of liquors, full scale shipments of liquors can commence. On Tuesday 2/25, the WA Department of Ecology issued the Kapstone a variance to accept this hazardous material.

Additionally, approximately 2,100 gallons of hydrochloric acid were removed for disposal by EPA.

Also during this week the EPA OSCs met with representatives from Foss Maritime a perspective contractor to provide barge services.

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

2/24-28/14 - EPA civil investigators Whitenack and Alert interviewed several principles of former owners (e.g., Evergreen Pulp Company), plan to meet with the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, and have been actively engaged in an investigation and assessment of the responsibility of former owners.

2.1.4 Progress Metrics

<i>Waste Stream</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Manifest #</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Disposal</i>	<i>Recycled</i>
Caustic liquids	liquids	2.7m gallons				2/26-27/2014 25,200 gallons
Sulfuric Acid - Re-usable	liquids	6k gallons				Purchased by Valley Acid, Stratford, CA (11/13)
Sulfuric Acid - Waste	liquids	4k gallons				
Hydrochloric Acid - Waste	liquids	2,100 gallons	011138259 JJK	x		
Corrosive sludges	semi-solids	9k tons				

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

3/6/2014 - EPA, USCG PST, ERRS will meet with representatives of Kapstone to discuss the change of plans to unload the materials at their facility in Longview, WA.

Media event with Congressman Huffman, RA Jared Blumenfeld, and others tbd

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

Brief Region 10 OSCs, place based in Portland, OR regarding change of plans for transport and coordinate over-sight at the Kapstone facility with them.

3/24/2014 - Beginning this week, commence transport all liquors via vacuum truck. Pipe set up prepared for barge loading will be easily retrofitted to accommodate loading of vacuum trucks.

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

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
Washington Department of Ecology

4. Personnel On Site

EPA OSC - 2
START - 0
ERRS - 5
USCG PST - 7

Humboldt Bay Harbor District - 1

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.

