

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
Hood Mercury Response - Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region VI

Subject: POLREP #2
Progress
Hood Mercury Response

Odessa, TX
Latitude: 31.8825701 Longitude: -102.3758878

To:
From: Mike McAteer, OSC
Date: 3/23/2014
Reporting Period: 3/21/2014 - 3/23/2014

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	Contract Number:
D.O. Number:	Action Memo Date:
Response Authority: CERCLA	Response Type: Emergency
Response Lead: PRP	Incident Category: Removal Action
NPL Status: Non NPL	Operable Unit:
Mobilization Date: 3/20/2014	Start Date: 3/20/2014
Demob Date:	Completion Date:
CERCLIS ID:	RCRIS ID:
ERNS No.:	State Notification:
FPN#:	Reimbursable Account #:

1.1.1 Incident Category

Release of hazardous substance (elemental mercury) inside a school

1.1.2 Site Description

1.1.2.1 Location

Hood Junior High School - 601 E. 38th Street, Odessa, Texas 79762

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

EPA Region 6 was contacted by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) as well as the Texas Department of State Health Services on March 18, 2014, regarding a release of approximately 1 liquid ounce of elemental mercury inside Hood Junior High School in Odessa, Texas.

Early reports on the release indicated that a student found the mercury in a bottle near the school and he brought it inside the school where he shared it with other classmates. Once school administrators recognized that the students were playing with mercury, the exposed students were isolated from the rest of the students then sent by school bus to two local hospitals.

The school district has hired local hazmat contractors to conduct a cleanup of the school. Early assessment activities conducted appear to indicate that the contamination is limited to two classrooms and the cafeteria.

An EPA On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) as well as two START personnel mobilized to the school on March 20th to provide assistance to the school district and the Ector County Health District.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

Upon arrival, EPA met with Ector County Independent School District (ECISD) officials and their contractors to evaluate response actions to date. Allied International Emergency and CTEH have been contracted by ECISD to remediate Hood Junior High School. While clean-up activities are ongoing, students are attending class at the nearby Technical High School. EPA continues to conduct oversight and further investigate any possible spread of the mercury into the surrounding community by students who were potentially exposed.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

Contractors for ECISD continue clean up activities. Along with heating and venting, a 10x10 section of flooring has been removed in the cafeteria to facilitate reduction of ambient mercury levels. Further heating and venting of classrooms has also been ongoing throughout the day on March 23rd.

Working in cooperation with the clean-up contractor, the shoes of students along with their school lockers have been monitored for possible contamination.

EPA has completed a separate but coordinated sweep of the entire school using a Lumex mercury monitor. A janitor's closet adjacent to the cafeteria was further investigated. The room contained a floor sink and mops used by janitorial staff to clean the cafeteria floor after the mercury was spilled. Elevated mercury vapors were detected. Contract workers filled the basin with concrete to seal any mercury vapors. The south hallway of the school has been mopped with vinegar and water and will be further remediated using mercury binding agent tonight. PPE shoe covers continue to indicate contamination is present in the hallways, cafeteria, and at least two classrooms.

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

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

ECISD Contractors will continue to remediate affected areas using mercury binding agents in efforts to prevent cross-contamination of affected surfaces onto the shoes and clothing of returning students.

An 8 hour sampling event of the ambient air of the affected areas is planned for the 24th. In addition, after additional remediation, activity based monitoring will take place to represent the normal activities of students in the school to establish the risk of cross contamination and possible spread of any remaining mercury.

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

Ongoing efforts will continue to ensure the mercury contamination has not been spread by students evacuated from the school into their place of residence.

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

EPA will continue to coordinate with officials from the Ector County Independent School District to ensure proper remediation of Hood Junior High School.

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

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Ector County Independent School District

Ector County Health Department

Texas Department of State Health Services

TCEQ - Midland District

U.S. EPA

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)

Weston Solutions, Inc.

Allied International Emergency Services

Center for Toxicology and Environmental Health, LLC (CTEH)

4. Personnel On Site

No information available at this time.

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.