

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



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Region IX

**Subject:** POLREP #7  
Initiation of the Pulping Liquor Removal Phase  
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:** 3/31/2014

**Reporting Period:** 3/24/14 - 3/31/14

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

<b>Site Number:</b>	A949	<b>Contract Number:</b>	EP-S9-12-01
<b>D.O. Number:</b>	0937	<b>Action Memo Date:</b>	11/4/2013
<b>Response Authority:</b>	CERCLA	<b>Response Type:</b>	Emergency
<b>Response Lead:</b>	EPA	<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>NPL Status:</b>	Non NPL	<b>Operable Unit:</b>	
<b>Mobilization Date:</b>	9/30/2013	<b>Start Date:</b>	10/1/2013
<b>Demob Date:</b>		<b>Completion Date:</b>	11/11/2014
<b>CERCLIS ID:</b>		<b>RCRIS ID:</b>	
<b>ERNS No.:</b>		<b>State Notification:</b>	
<b>FPN#:</b>		<b>Reimbursable Account #:</b>	

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 scrapping 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 10,000 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, the USCG Pacific Strike Team, and EPA Contractors (Environmental Quality Management, Global Diving and Salvage, and Marine Pollution Control) remobilized to the Samoa Pulp Mill Site on 3/24/14 to initiate the large-scale removal and transportation of the pulping liquors. In preceding weeks EPA completed final negotiations and agreement with the Kapstone Paper Company in Longview, WA, to take approximately 3 million gallons of the pulping liquors that remained at the Samoa Pulp Mill. As was discussed in PolRep 6 EPA and the Humboldt Harbor District continued to explore transporting the liquors by chemical barge however by the end of February it became apparent that no USCG certified barge could be leased in a timeframe to meet the project's needs. Lastly, on March 10th a 6.8 magnitude earthquake struck off shore which caused alarm and increased interest in all stakeholders to remove the pulping liquors as soon as possible. Shortly thereafter it was determined to begin transporting the pulping liquors by tank truck.

The tanker truck route is Highway 255 from the Samoa Pulp Mill site to Highway 101 North. From there the trucks will travel to Crescent City where they will take Route 299 to Highway 5 at Grants Pass, OR. EPA has contacted all federal, state, and local emergency management agencies along these highways to notify them of the travel of these tank trucks. In light of the volume of material that may be potentially transported by truck (i.e., 3 million gallons) EPA anticipates that up to 700 truck loads will be required to move the pulping liquors to Longview, WA. EPA is planning on filling 8-10 trucks per day and load trucks Mondays through Saturdays. The "turnaround" time is anticipated to take 3 days.

Certainly the number of truck loads does raise concern from all parties involved. EPA will continue to explore other barge or tanker vessel services from the East and Gulf Coasts. In the interim the pulping liquors will continue to be transported by truck.

#### 2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

3/25-26/14 - ERRS contractors and members of the USCG Pacific Strike Team reconfigured the loading pipeline constructed by EPA in the fall and added a tank truck loading rack at the NW side of the facility. The loading rack has the capability of loading up to 3 tank trucks simultaneously.

3/27/14 - ERRS contractors and members of the USCG Pacific Strike Team completed work on the updated pipeline and loading rack. Also, during the day all laboratory chemical overpacks - which included approximately 2000 containers of laboratory chemicals of various size was removed for disposal.

3/28/14 - EPA Regional Administrator Jared Blumenfeld, US Congressman Jared Huffman, and Sector San Francisco Captain Stump along with members of the press and local politicians came for a site visit and press conference. During this time 2 tank trucks of black pulping liquor were loaded and departed for Longview, WA.

3/29/14 - All personnel on site participated in a final walk-through and training of the tank truck loading rack procedures and practiced a full scale exercise with water.

3/31/14 - ERRS contractors and members of the USCG Pacific Strike Team loaded 5 tank trucks with green pulping liquor. These trucks departed for Longview, WA by mid-day.

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

On-going

#### 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				To date - 53k gallons
						Purchased by

Sulfuric Acid - Re-usable	liquids	6k gallons				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	0000990296DAT	x	x	21st Century Environmental Management of CA, LP
"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

During the week of 3/31/14 it is anticipated that EPA's contractors and the USCG PST will load approximately 45 tank trucks. In addition, the USCG PST will continue to pump green pulping liquor from Tank No. 7 to the Frac Tank for temporary storage (prior to loading to trucks). Also during the week it is anticipated the various smaller sulphuric acid tanks will be sampled and prepared for emptying, decontamination, and disposal.

#### 2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

The upcoming weeks will continue loading tank trucks of approximately 50 tank trucks per week.

#### 2.2.1.2 Next Steps

Continue to remove pulping liquors and other corrosive liquids (i.e., sulfuric acid)

### 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

### 2.5.1 Safety Officer

EQM Pat Heyneman and USCG PO1 Davis are the Site Safety Officers during this period

### 2.5.2 Liaison Officer

EPA OSC Calanog and USCG Lt Van Leer are serving as the Liaison Officers during this period

### 2.5.3 Information Officer

David Yogi is EPA's Public Affairs point of contact.  
Lt. Leigh Van Leer is the USCG's Public Affairs point of contact.

## 3. Participating Entities

### 3.1 Unified Command

US EPA  
USCG Pacific Strike Team  
Humboldt Bay Harbor District

### 3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Humboldt County Department of Health

Samoa Fire Department  
Humboldt Bay Fire District  
Del Norte County Department of Environmental Health  
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  
USCG PST - 11  
Environmental Quality Mgmt - 4  
Global Diving and Salvage - 2  
Marine Pollution Control - 3  
Humboldt Bay Harbor District - 2

#### **5. Definition of Terms**

No information available at this time.

#### **6. Additional sources of information**

##### **6.1 Internet location of additional information/report**

[http://www.times-standard.com/news/ci\\_25447248/a-disaster-that-miraculously-did-not-happen:-first-hazardous-liquid-haul-leaves-samoa-pulp-mill](http://www.times-standard.com/news/ci_25447248/a-disaster-that-miraculously-did-not-happen:-first-hazardous-liquid-haul-leaves-samoa-pulp-mill)

##### **6.2 Reporting Schedule**

During the pulping liquor phase of the removal PolReps will be done every Monday afternoon.

#### **7. Situational Reference Materials**

Heavy rains continue to persist