

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
US Silica Plant Spill - Removal Polrep
Initial and Final Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region III

Subject: POLREP #1
Final PolRep
US Silica Plant Spill
Berkeley Springs, WV

To:

From: Don McLaughlin, On-Scene Coordinator

Date: 5/16/2014

Reporting Period: 13 May to 15 May, 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 Assessment
NPL Status:	Non NPL	Operable Unit:	
Mobilization Date:	5/13/2014	Start Date:	5/13/2014
Demob Date:	5/14/2014	Completion Date:	5/15/2014
CERCLIS ID:		RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:		State Notification:	
FPN#:		Reimbursable Account #:	

At approximately 2:30pm on Tuesday May 13th, a release occurred at the US Silica Plant in Berkeley Springs (Morgan County), WV. This Plant uses chemicals to process sandstone into sand for silica use, glass, and cosmetics. Sulfuric Acid (93%), Petroleum Sulfanate, and Caustic Soda are the main chemicals/materials used in the sandstone refining process. These 3 materials were stored in tanks surrounded by an antiquated berm/containment system. The tanks were in very close proximity to each other.

The Spill occurred as a result of a facility operator accidentally rupturing the piping system of a pumping station located inside the containment berm that led to the tanks, causing a mixture of these 3 materials to come in contact and release.

The capacity of the tanks are as follows: Sulfuric Acid tank capacity=6,000gal, Caustic Soda tank capacity=8,200gal, and Petroleum Sulfanate tank capacity=12,000gal. The facility estimated that 5,000 gallons of Sulfuric Acid, 3,000 gallons of Caustic Soda, and 600 gallons of Petroleum Sulfanate had been released into the environment. A plume was generated as a result of the release, and the facility operations in the area ceased as a result of the plume.

The facility contacted the local fire department, who in turn notified hazmat teams from Washington County MD and Berkeley County WV to respond to the release. The National Response Center was not notified of the release until the following morning.

EPA was made aware of the Spill from a FEMA Watchstander Spot Report, and the OSC followed up with local and state authorities. Based on these discussions, the OSC deployed to the Spill location and arrived at about 0200.

Hazmat teams successfully secured the release by closing off the shut-off valves of the tanks at approximately 10pm. Due to the poor shape of the containment berm housing the 3 tanks, large amounts of sand were placed against and surrounding the berm to aid in containing the chemical mixture remaining inside the berm. Since the release was secured within the facility property, based on visual on-site presence, EPA determined there was no release to navigable waters.

The facility hired a clean-up contractor to assist in disposing of the contaminated materials generated from the release, and they worked through Tuesday evening into Wednesday morning. The contractor will remove to the facility on Thursday/Friday May 15th/16th to complete removal activities.

OSC McLaughlin and WVDEP personnel met at the location of the spill on Wednesday morning to discuss the release, and offered recommendations to US Silica for the facility's path forward. WVDEP will be on site Thursday and Friday to oversee the facility's contractor cleanup activities. EPA offered additional

support as needed, however, no additional EPA support is anticipated. The facility will keep the OSC updated as clean up efforts progress.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

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2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

WVDEP Oversight of RP Contractor to complete removal action

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

None additional at this time

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

Continue to receive updates on removal status from RP and WVDEP as needed

2.2.2 Issues

Facility did not contact NRC regarding this spill/release until the day following the release.

2.3 Logistics Section

No information available at this time.

2.4 Finance Section

2.4.1 Narrative

N/A

2.5 Other Command Staff

No information available at this time.

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

US Silica Plant, WVDEP

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.