

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
Sycamore Point Mercury - Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region IV

Subject: POLREP #1
Initial Polrep
Sycamore Point Mercury

Woodstock, GA
Latitude: 34.1514970 Longitude: -84.5619190

To:
From: Stephen Ball, OSC
Date: 2/21/2015
Reporting Period: 2/18/2015 - 2/21/2015

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	Contract Number:
D.O. Number:	Action Memo Date:
Response Authority: CERCLA	Response Type: Emergency
Response Lead: EPA	Incident Category: Removal Action
NPL Status: Non NPL	Operable Unit:
Mobilization Date: 2/18/2015	Start Date: 2/18/2015
Demob Date:	Completion Date:
CERCLIS ID:	RCRIS ID:
ERNS No.:	State Notification:
FPN#:	Reimbursable Account #:

1.1.1 Incident Category

Emergency Response to an uncontrolled release of elemental Mercury affecting multiple locations.

1.1.2 Site Description

Sometime in early February 2015, three adolescents (a female adolescent and male adolescent #1 and #2) reportedly discovered multiple containers of free elemental mercury in the basement of a residence owned by the grandparents of male adolescent #1; the residence was located at 624 Apache Trail in Woodstock, Georgia. According to available information, the adolescents played with the mercury and caused a release of the mercury inside the house and outside, throughout the property. The adolescents later went to school, where a teacher observed mercury in the hair of the female adolescent, and reported the incident to school officials. Several days after being notified by the school, the girl's parents took her to the emergency room, where her blood was drawn for testing of mercury concentrations. Results reportedly indicated the presence of mercury at concentrations exceeding health-based concentrations. Subsequently, doctors notified the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GA EPD) and an incident report was filed with the National Response Center. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mobilized On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Stephen Ball to the incident on February 18, 2015. Available information indicated that the mercury was contained in two separate containers approximately 64 ounces each in size and were stored in the house on Apache Trail. The actual amount of mercury in the containers prior to the spill is unknown.

1.1.2.1 Location

- 2008 Longwood Drive, Woodstock, Georgia (grandmother of the female adolescent)
- 525 Sycamore Point, Woodstock, Georgia (residence of the female adolescent)
- 624 Apache Trail, Woodstock, Georgia (source house)
- 611 Apache Trail, Woodstock, Georgia (residence of male adolescent #2)
- 510 Cove Road, Canton, Georgia (residence of male adolescent #1; grandson of the source house owners)
- 8871 Knox Bridge Highway, Canton, Georgia (Ace Academy, school attended by the female adolescent and male adolescent #2)

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

Uncontrolled release of Mercury into the environment and the basement of a residence. Elemental mercury was released in the interior, the front yard; and the driveway of a residence located on Apache Trail Street. Additional residences may have been affected. Mercury is a hazardous substance as defined by 40 CFR 302.4 and this release poses a threat to public health and welfare of the United States according to the criteria for a removal action listed in 300.415(b)(2) of the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

Ambient mercury levels of 10-15,000 ng/m³ (ERRB action level of 1,000 ng/m³), were detected in the adolescent female's residence. Levels of mercury vapors in the females bedroom exceeded the mercury vapors analyzer machine's detection capability at 50,000 ng/m³. OSC Ball attempted to gain access the male's teenagers house and the grandparent's house where the mercury was released but was unsuccessful. OSC Ball is coordinating with school officials to schedule a mercury vapors assesment of the school.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

02/18/2015

The OSC met with property owners and explained the dangers of Mercury contamination in a residence. Property owners granted verbal access to screen both residences. The OSC conducted an assessment with a Mercury Vapors Analyzer instrument and didn't detect concentrations above EPA action levels in two of the residences.

Mercury concentrations of 10-15k ug/m³ Hg in air were detected throughout in one residence house. Concentrations greater than 50k ug/m³ Hg were detected in the adolescents room. The OSC advised the family to change clothes and vacate the home temporarily. Health dept personnel explained the dangers and health hazards of Hg to the family while OSC Ball explained clean-up options and potential cost recovery from EPA. The family was given time to consider their options and get back to OSC.

The OSC continued efforts to attempted to gain access to Ace Academy to conduct . A message was taken and referred to Mark Kissel, Cherokee County Police Chief, for follow up with the OSC.

At approximately 6:00 pm the OSC contacted another property owner. OSC Ball explained the dangers of Mercury contamination and the potential to easily and unknowingly transport mercury from place to place. The OSC stated he was concerned of potential exposure to mercury vapors and the effects continued exposure could have on the residents health. The OSC requested to assess the residences or speak to an adult. The individual stated that he was very busy with work and going out of town over the weekend and OSC would not be able to test any homes.

OSC contacted Mr. Smith who refused to grant access to EPA.

2/19/2015

Mark Kissel contacted OSC Ball and advised that the school was aware of the mercury incident and he would pass the OSC's information on to the school's Risk Manager for further details and or actions. The OSC met with health department personnel to discuss the current situation. An attempt was made to gain access to the school through health department contacts. Access was scheduled for 1pm the following day.

Property owners for 525 Sycamore Point granted EPA access to conduct the clean-up. It was agreed that the work would begin on Friday 2/20/2015. Owners signed an access agreement and a Notice of Federal Interest was delivered.

2/20/2015

OSC Ball, START and ERRS mobilized to the site to begin remediation at 525 Sycamore Point. Personal items were removed from the source bedroom of the teenage girl and carpet was removed from her room, bathroom and upstairs hallway. Heating and venting was also conducted in the source room. A heat tent was constructed to heat and vent personal items. No free mercury was observed.

OSC Ball and START also met the Georgia Department of Health and the Cherokee County School District Supervisor of Maintenance at Ace Academy at 1pm. The school representative provided a list of classrooms that the students entered while attending class. Rooms were assesed with a Mercury Vapors Analyzer. In addition the cafeteria, principals office, bathrooms and some janitorial closets were assesesed. Although mercury vapors were detected, none of the detections exceeded the EPA action level of 3,000 ng/m³. For the detailed results of the school please review the documents section of this webpage.

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Clean-up continued at the site by management of personal items and removal of a washing machine. Readings on the mercury vapor analyzer of >50,000 ng/m³ (highest detection limit) were detected in the residences washing machine. A mercury binding solution was applied to the bathroom tile floor and the laundry room floor. Residence clearance was initiated at 11am and completed successfully at 4pm. Results of the clearance indicated average breathing space concentrations for mercury in air in all rooms tested below 1,000 ng/m³. Detailed results can be found in the documents section of this webpage. All personal items that were classified for disposal were reviewed with the renter as well as the property owner. Both agreed again to dispose of the contaminated personal items as is stated in the access agreement.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

- Screened one residence (Gallman) - No elevated Mercury vapors detected
- Screened Hicks residence - Mercury in air greater exceded EPA action levels
- Conducted clean-up at Hicks residence
- Screened Ace Academy - No elevated Mercury vapors detected

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>
Mercury waste	solid	1 rolloff			Landfill

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

Continue to request access at additional residences including the source residence.

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

Gain access, assess, and remediate if necessary mercury contaminated properties.

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

2.2.2 Issues

Access has been refused by Smith and Mortus.

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

EPA
GA EPD
GA Dept of Public Health

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Cherokee County Schools
American Red Cross
ATSDR

4. Personnel On Site

OSC - 1
START - 3
ERRS - 5

5. Definition of Terms

ATSDR - Agency for Toxic Substances Disease Registry
EPA - Environmental Protection Agency
OSC - On- Scene Coordinator
GA EPD - Georgia Environmental Protection Division
NCP - National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan
NRC - National Response Center
CFR - Code of Federal Regulations
RP - Responsible Party
NOFI - Notice of Federal Interest
EMA - Emergency Management Agency
ERRS - Emergency Rapid Response Service
CERCLA - Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act
FPN - Federal Project Number

6. Additional sources of information

No information available at this time.

7. Situational Reference Materials

No information available at this time.