

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
John Day Vapor Response - Removal Polrep
Initial Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region X

Subject: POLREP #1
Initial
John Day Vapor Response
John Day, OR
Latitude: 44.4118110 Longitude: -118.9529053

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From: Richard Franklin, On Scene Coordinator

Date: 5/22/2015

Reporting Period: 05/20/2015 - 05/22/2015

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 Assessment
NPL Status:	Non NPL	Operable Unit:	
Mobilization Date:	5/21/2015	Start Date:	5/20/2015
Demob Date:		Completion Date:	
CERCLIS ID:	ORN001001391	RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:		State Notification:	ODEQ
FPN#:		Reimbursable Account #:	

1.1.1 Incident Category

Emergency Response

1.1.2 Site Description

The site consists of an approximately 1/2 mile long and 2-block wide area of residences, a church, and some light commercial businesses, located on the south side of the city of John Day. The site runs parallel to, and along S. Canyon Blvd (U.S. Hwy 395) and Canyon Creek. Residences include single and multi-family homes and rental properties.

Canyon Creek is reported to be a migratory pathway for salmon and steelhead trout. Further, Canyon Creek flows into the John Day River within approximately 3/4 mile of the site. The John Day River is a significant river in eastern Oregon noted for its steelhead trout and salmon runs, smallmouth bass fishery, and recreational activities. It is also used for irrigation by farms and ranches along its length.

1.1.2.1 Location

John Day, Grant County, Oregon.

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

Volatile Organic Compounds, including hexane, benzene, ethylbenzene, xylenes, 2-methylbutane, pentane, butane, hexane, cyclohexane, 3- and 2-methylhexane, heptane, isobutene, and methylcyclohexane have been detected in a vapors that are believed to be releasing from an unknown groundwater plume into at least 20 homes, some commercial properties, and into the environment.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

N/A

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

In mid-May 2015, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) requested assistance from EPA in response to numerous reports of unusual odors in and around homes and commercial buildings along South Canyon Boulevard in John Day, Oregon. The problem initially began in February and early March, 2015, at the USDA and State Soil Conservation Service building, where employees noticed strong odors and health effects such as headaches, irritated eyes and sore throats. The Service then hired a consultant to investigate the odors and their source in the building. The consultant's investigation revealed unusually high levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the building and crawl space. Similar complaints from residents in the same area began surfacing in early May. The City of John Day began investigating the problem, hired a consultant to test indoor air at a home and the local library, and then contacted the ODEQ for assistance. Similar results (elevated VOCs) were found in both locations, and that more extensive air monitoring for vapors may be needed. Specific VOCs of concern include chemicals such as hexane, benzene, ethylbenzene, and xylenes.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

EPA On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs) Franklin and Stanfield, along with EPA START contractors, mobilized to the site and arrived on scene May 21, 2015. EPA met with the City Manager, Police Chief, Fire Chief, and Manager of Public Works to obtain an understanding of the history and take a tour of the affected area of town. EPA then set up a command post in an old Fire Department administration building, and immediately began conducting door-to-door air monitoring in order to determine the extent and general levels of vapors. After initial results by the EPA team indicated high levels of VOCs in basements and crawl spaces, and releases of VOCs to the outside air, OSC Franklin then mobilized additional START resources (Mobile R10 Lab) and air monitoring equipment (HAPSITE GC/MS) to further assist and investigate the problem. OSC Franklin also requested an EPA Community Involvement Coordinator (CIC) and Public Affairs specialist mobilize to the site. CIC Judy Smith mobilized to the site and arrived late in the evening.

On May 22, EPA teams continued with air monitoring activities in area homes and commercial structures. The second air monitoring START teams arrived at the site and began integrating into site activities. Public Affairs and CIC specialist Judy Smith met with the John Day City manager, and began preparing site fact sheets for the public, as well as contacting and briefing County and State Health Departments. and Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs reservation.

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

Although several potential commercial businesses and sources in the area have been identified in the immediate area, no specific PRPs have been identified. Investigation activities into source and PRPs continue.

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

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

EPA and START teams will continue air monitoring and investigation activities to determine the lateral extent and magnitude of the problem, and will focus on identifying specific VOC compounds using the HAPSITE GC/MS instrument. Sampling of indoor air and groundwater at several site is planned for the week of May 25, 2015.

CIC Judy Smith will continue address public concerns and distributing site fact sheets. A radio interview with the local radio station KJDY is anticipated to take place the week of May 25.

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

2.2.2 Issues

Ongoing release and high levels of VOCs to some residential and commercial structures and environment

from subsurface and/or groundwater.

Undetermined source.

Potential public health threat.

2.3 Logistics Section

Logistical support and Command Post provided by City of John Day.

2.4 Finance Section

No information available at this time.

2.5 Other Command Staff

2.5.1 Safety Officer

EPA
EPA START Contractor

2.5.2 Liaison Officer

Judy Smith, EPA CIC and Public Relations Officer

2.5.3 Information Officer

Judy Smith, EPA CIC and Public Relations Officer

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

City of John Day, Oregon
Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
U.S. EPA Region 10, Oregon Operations Office

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Oregon State Health
Grant County Health

4. Personnel On Site

EPA On-Scene Coordinators (2)
EPA Community Involvement Coordinator
EPA Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team (5)

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.

POLREP #1 Last Updated 5/22/2015