

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
Velsicol Athletic Fields Site - Removal Polrep
Initial Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region V

Subject: POLREP #1
Initial POLREP
Velsicol Athletic Fields Site
0532-OU3
St. Louis, MI
Latitude: 43.4112240 Longitude: -84.6009850

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From: Jon Gulch, On-Scene Coordinator

Date: 5/29/2015

Reporting Period: May 18-29, 2015

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	0532	Contract Number:	EP-S5-08-04
D.O. Number:	0079	Action Memo Date:	5/5/2015
Response Authority:	CERCLA	Response Type:	Time-Critical
Response Lead:	EPA	Incident Category:	Removal Action
NPL Status:	NPL	Operable Unit:	03
Mobilization Date:	5/18/2015	Start Date:	5/18/2015
Demob Date:		Completion Date:	
CERCLIS ID:	MID00722439	RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:		State Notification:	
FPN#:		Reimbursable Account #:	

1.1.1 Incident Category

Time Critical Removal Action

1.1.2 Site Description

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Velsicol Chemical Corporation/Pine River Superfund Site (Site), National Superfund Database Identification Number MID00722439, is located in St. Louis, Gratiot County, Michigan. The Site has been divided into three Operable Units (OUs). OU1 includes 52-acres commonly referred to as the former plant site (FPS) and adjacent residential areas. The Pine

River flows along the western and northern boundary of the FPS into Mill Pond, where a hydroelectric dam is located (about ¼-mile east of the FPS). OU2 consisted of contaminated sediments in the Pine River upstream of the St. Louis dam and adjacent to the FPS. The remedy for OU2 was completed in 2006. OU3 consists of contaminated sediments in the Pine River downstream of the St. Louis dam, including the Athletic Fields of the St. Louis Public Schools.

The FPS was used for modern industrial operations beginning in the mid-1930s until the plant was closed in 1977. Historical operations at the FPS included a lumber mill, oil refinery, salt processing plant, and chemical manufacturing plant. In 1935, Michigan Chemical Corporation (MCC) purchased the property and operated a chemical manufacturing business. In 1965, Velsicol Chemical Corporation gained a controlling interest in MCC.

MCC manufactured a wide variety of products at the FPS from 1936 through 1977, including various salts, magnesium oxide, rare earth chemicals, fire retardants (hexabromobenzene [HBB], polybrominated biphenyl [PBB], tris (2,3-dibromopropyl) phosphate [TRIS]), and pesticides (dichlorodiphenyl trichloroethane [DDT] and 1,2-dibromo-3-chloropropane [DBCP]).

Velsicol closed the chemical plant in 1977 and demolished the facility. An agreement was reached through a consent judgment between Velsicol Chemical, EPA and the Michigan Department of Environmental Management (MDEQ) in 1982 to address the FPS. A slurry wall and cap was placed over the 52-acre FPS. The consent judgment did not require remediation of the contaminated sediments in the Pine River because the parties to the consent judgment concluded that the most appropriate alternative was to leave the contaminated sediments in place. The 1982 consent judgment gave Velsicol Chemical Corporation a release from any liability under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA), and State laws, with a limited reopener.

In January 2015, EPA sampled the St. Louis High School Athletic Fields as part of the Velsicol-OU3 Superfund Site. The objective of the investigation was to further define the nature and extent of hexabromobenzene and DDT at the fields. The field investigation activities were based on the additional scope of work identified in the Technical Directive Memorandum received from EPA on July 21, 2014. The results of the sampling event indicate that thirty-eight (38) sample results exceed the ecological Preliminary Remediation Goal (PRG) established for DDT (5 mg/kg) at the Site.

1.1.2.1 Location

The Site is located at the St. Louis High School athletic field complex in St. Louis, Gratiot County, Michigan. The Site includes a baseball field, softball field, practice football field, and green area near the flood plain of the Pine River. The Site is located behind the NS Nurnberger Middle School. The Site is located within OU03 and includes the flood plain associated with the Pine River. Land use around the Site includes school property, park and residential. Residential homes are located within 100 feet of the Site. The Site topography is relatively flat and dips slightly to the southwest towards the Pine River.

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

Ecological receptors could become exposed to site contaminants through direct contact with soils contaminated by off-site deposited sediments; ingestion of soils contaminated by off-site deposited sediments; and ingestion of contaminated food (e.g., sediment- or soil-dwelling insects, vegetation).

Analytical results described above indicate that hazardous substances, as defined by CERCLA Section 101(14), pollutants, and contaminants are present at the Site, and represent an actual or potential exposure threat to nearby animal populations. Concentrations of DDT exceed the PRG (5 mg/kg). An initial PRG range of 2-9 mg/kg total DDT in soil for robin reproduction is based on a high quality laboratory toxicological study (performed with Japanese quail showing decreased post-hatch chick survival) and a robin exposure model based on site-specific data on soil-earthworm bioaccumulation. A laboratory study of ring doves performed with a single exposure treatment at a dose intermediate to the ones bracketing adverse effects in the Japanese quail study also showed decreased post-hatch chick survival. The soil PRG for Velsicol conditions derived from this study is 5.6 mg/kg. Selection of this PRG decreases the likelihood of encountering the possible developmental effects indicated by the aforementioned studies. A spatially-averaged 5 mg/kg total DDT soil concentration is recommended for a preliminary remedial goal (PRG) for acceptable robin reproduction and development of offspring.

The Site is located behind the Pine River Elementary School in a residential neighborhood and includes a baseball field, softball field, track and practice football field, and open play fields associated with the St. Louis High School. The Site is bordered on the south by the Pine River and by additional adjacent residential houses and properties to the north within 100 feet of the Site.

According to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane) is a pesticide once widely used to control insects in agriculture and insects that carry diseases such as malaria. DDT is a white, crystalline solid with no odor or taste. Its use in the U.S. was banned in 1972 because of damage to wildlife, but is still used in some countries.

DDT affects the nervous system. People who accidentally swallowed large amounts of DDT became excitable and had tremors and seizures. These effects went away after the exposure stopped. No effects were seen in people who took small daily doses of DDT by capsule for 18 months. A study in humans showed that women who had high amounts of a form of DDE in their breast milk were unable to breast feed their babies for as long as women who had little DDT in the breast milk. Another study in humans showed that women who had high amounts of DDT in the blood had an increased chance of having premature babies. In animals, short-term exposure to large amounts of DDT in food affected the nervous system, while long-term exposure to smaller amounts affected the liver. Also in animals, short-term oral exposure to small amounts of DDT or its breakdown products may also have harmful effects on reproduction.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

EPA documented the presence of elevated levels of hazardous substances at the Site, as defined by Section 101(14) of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. § 9601(14), including DDT within the flood plain boundary. Samples taken in the area showed total DDT in the soil at depths of 1-2 bgs in levels exceeding the PRG (5 mg/kg).

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

On May 18, 2015, EPA mobilized its Emergency and Rapid Removal Service (ERRS) and Superfund Technical Assistance and Response Team (START) contractors to the Site. Activities performed during the week included: initial sampling to determine the extent of contamination; mobilization of the EPA laboratory trailer; and establishment of sub-contracts required to complete the project.

On May 27, 2015, EPA mobilized the remainder of the ERRS crew to begin the removal action. Activities performed during the week included: additional extent of contamination sampling, mobilization of office trailers, generator and heavy equipment; installation of perimeter fencing to restrict access to the excavation area; installation of silt fencing along the Pine River; and establishment of perimeter and personal air monitoring.

On May 29, 2015, EPA mobilized the remaining heavy equipment to the Site; established perimeter air monitoring with DataRAM 4000 particulate monitors; and began excavation activities in the practice football field area (B5). Excavated soil will be stockpiled on-site until a disposal facility is established.

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

N/A

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

- Receive laboratory data and establish the exact extent-of-contamination for the excavation;
- Establish perimeter and personal air monitoring;
- Begin excavation; and
- Conduct restoration activities.

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

- Complete excavation; and
- Perform restoration.

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

- Continue Removal Action.

2.2.2 Issues

None

2.3 Logistics Section

N/A

2.4 Finance Section

No information available at this time.

2.5 Other Command Staff

2.5.1 Safety Officer

N/A

2.5.2 Liaison Officer

N/A

2.5.3 Information Officer

The Information Officer for this site is Diane Russell, U.S. EPA Community Involvement Coordinator. For more information regarding the Remedial Project: <http://www.epa.gov/region5/cleanup/velsicol/index.htm>

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

N/A

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

U.S. EPA-Remedial Team
MDEQ

4. Personnel On Site

EPA - 2
START - 1
ERRS - 6

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.epa.gov/region5/cleanup/velsicol/index.htm>

6.2 Reporting Schedule

N/A

7. Situational Reference Materials

N/A