

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



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Region IX

**Subject:** POLREP #19  
Sludge removal near completion  
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:** Chris Weden, OSC

**Date:** 7/10/2015

**Reporting Period:** 6/15 - 7/10/2015

## 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>       | 7/30/2014      |
| <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>        | 9/30/2015      |
| <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 primary concern is 11 ASTs containing 3-4 million gallons of highly caustic liquids (pH greater than 13). Five of these ASTs are not designed to store caustic liquids and periodic seismic activity (6.8 earthquake occurred off coast of Humboldt Co. 3/9/2014) has caused grave concern regarding their stability. Additionally, there are a half dozen ASTs containing 2000-3000 gallons of sulfuric acid (pH less than 1), 3,000 tons of corrosive sludges in uncontained areas, approximately 3000 gallons of turpentine, and several thousand containers of various types (i.e., compressed gas cylinders, paints/thinners, mercury containing gauges and equipment).



|                                 |            |                      |  |  |  |  |
|---------------------------------|------------|----------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Waste oils                      | liquids    | ~2k gallons          |  |  |  | removed by Asbury Environmental for recycling                  |
| Hg elemental                    | liquid     | 250 lbs              |  |  |  | Arranging for retirement at Bethlehem Apparatus via Stericycle |
| Hazardous corrosive sludges     | solidified | ~3500 tons           |  |  |  | US Ecology - Beatty, NV and Kettleman Hills                    |
| Non-hazardous corrosive liquids | liquid     | 45,968 gallons       |  |  |  | US Ecology - Beatty, NV  |
| Hazardous corrosive liquids     | liquid     | 105,198 gallons      |  |  |  | US Ecology - Beatty, NV  |
| Sulfuric acid tank bottoms      | sludge     | 14 over-packed drums |  |  |  | Clean Harbors  |
| Steel                           |            | 1144.53 tons         |  |  |  | Recycled at SIMS Metals in Richmond, CA                        |
| Stainless Steel                 |            | 83.63 tons           |  |  |  | Recycled at SIMS Metals in Richmond, CA                        |

## 2.2 Planning Section

HBHD has been ordered by the CUPA to conduct a thorough inventory of all remaining hazardous materials on the Samoa Pulp Mill property (HHW, waste oil, sand blast grit, etc.). HBHD conducted this inventory during the week of 7/6/2015 and found more sulfuric acid sludge (stored in trash can) and chemicals in the HHW area that might not be accepted via the County HHW program. ERS will, pending management approval, re-mobilize after HBHD has finalized their inventory and assist them with the removal of these materials.

There is a possibility that Naval Special Forces may implode the smoke stack and the six concrete/tile tanks on-site. When this activity is confirmed and scheduled, an OSC, with PST and ERRS will return to provide logistical support and arrange for T&D of the wastes described above that HBHD cannot address.

## 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

USEPA Federal On-Scene Coordinator  
USCG PST FOSCR - Deputy

### 3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Humboldt Bay Harbor District  
CalOSHA  
Samoa Volunteer FD

## 4. Personnel On Site

At the end of this reporting period after various demobilizations.

1 - OSC  
1 - PST

1 - HBHD  
10 - ERRS (7 - EQM, 3 - Global)

**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.