

**United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region X
POLLUTION REPORT**

Date: Monday, March 28, 2005

From: Anthony Barber

Subject: First and Final POLREP
Clear Creek/Wallowa River Spill
104 West 1st Street, Wallowa, OR
Latitude: 45.5700000
Longitude: -117.5294000

POLREP No.: 1	Site #: Z0AT
Reporting Period: 01/22/2005-01/28/2005	D.O. #:
Start Date: 1/22/2005	Response Authority: OPA
Mob Date: 1/22/2005	Response Type: Emergency
Demob Date: 1/28/2005	NPL Status: Non NPL
Completion Date: 1/28/2005	Incident Category: Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:	Contract #
RCRIS ID #:	Reimbursable Account # 2005HE10N0XAT302D91CZ0AT
FPN# E05006	

Site Description

This response is to discharge, probably over 100 gallons, of home heating oil to Clear Creek, a tributary of the Wallowa River, in Wallowa, Oregon. On Saturday 1/22/05, Oregon DEQ was notified by City of Wallowa crews that an unknown substance in Clear Creek and the Wallowa River was causing a confirmed fish kill in the River. The material was later identified as home heating oil.

An underground home heating oil tank was found to be the source of product heating oil in Clear Creek (also known as Clearwater Ditch) and also an old millrace. Two old tanks were identified as potential sources. Both were removed with one found to be leaking with significant contamination to soil and groundwater. 100 cubic yards of oil contaminated soil and 2000 gallons of contaminated groundwater were removed.

Quantity of discharged oil is unknown, but was sufficient enough to tranist thorug a storm drain over four blocks away and coast over 1400 feet of stream to the Wallowa River. The fuel in the millrace was estimated to be over 100 gallons. The discharge from the tank was estimated to have been ongoing for as much as 10 years or more, with recent discharge rate dramatically increasing. Biologists documented over 50 fish killed, including Rainbow Trout, Steelhead Smolt, and threatened and endangered Chinook Smolt. Some of the dead fish were found in the millrace. The discharge was ongoing to the Clear Creek, millrace, and Wallowa River from groundwater via dewatering pump and storm drain system. The total distance the oil discharged from the source tank to the Wallowa River, a navigable water of the United States, was 2800 feet.

Current Activities

Weather during this reporting period was cold and icy.

Saturday, 1/22/05: NRC Environmental Services was contracted by DEQ on 1/22/05 to respond to the spill event to evaluate the site conditions, deploy boom if necessary and evaluate source and removal/disposal options. NRC responded to the incident and deployed absorbent booms and pads to control the source and begin initial cleanup on the Mill Race. A DEQ OSC was dispatched to the site to arrive on 1/23/05 as requested by Wallowa County Emergency Manager Mat Marmor.

Sunday 1/23/05: DEQ SOSC Mike Renz arrives on site at 09:00 and is briefed by NRC, the Wallowa County Emergency Manager and City Staff. Four NRC personnel were on scene addressing fuel in the Mill Race by placing booms and absorbent pads. Unified Command was established by agreement of the

parties and overall objectives were established for the site. See ICS 201 forms. The pathway of the oil was determined, and likely sources were explored. Concurrence was reached concerning the source of the oil as the City drainage sump pumping the oil from groundwater to the storm sewer. The likely source of the release was determined to be one of two underground home heating oil tanks located at 104 and 106 First Streets. Power to the sump pump was disconnected to eliminate the discharge to the storm drain. NRC crews were reduced to two men, and unneeded equipment was demobilized. Unified Command established activities for Monday via Incident Action Plan, ICS 202 forms. Personnel: DEQ OSC, 4 DEQ contractors.

Monday 1/24/05: NRC and City crews continued clean up of the Mill Race and initiated flushing and clean up of the storm drain to eliminate source material. More dead fish were discovered, collected and turned over to ODFW. Owners of the two suspected tanks were contacted and informed of their responsibility to investigate their suspect tank releases pursuant to Oregon Law. The home owners, with assistance from Henderson Oil, local heating oil supplier, initiated installation of above ground tanks to act as alternate oil supply to facilitate removal of both UST's. Other potential sources of the release were investigated. DEQ SOSC coordinates activities using ICS. The NRC Crew remained at two people. The first press release was issued. Unified Command established activities for Tuesday via the Incident Action Plan and ICS 202 forms. Personnel: DEQ OSC, 2 DEQ contractors.

Tuesday, 1/25/05: NRC crews continue stream and storm sewer mop up and demobilized from the site with their waste sorbets. The above ground heating oil tanks for each suspect address were installed and furnaces were switched to the alternate fuel supplies. The underground storage tanks were pumped in preparation for removal on Wednesday by the homeowner's licensed heating oil tank (HOT) contractors: Byrnes Oil and Geologist, Martin Burke and Associates. Both homeowners agreed on a process to investigate and remove their tanks with 106 First Street going first as it seem the most likely leaker. One other potential source four blocks away, was identified. A USFS heating oil tank had received 80 gallons more fuel than normal. They were notified of their responsibility to investigate. Unified Command established activities for Wednesday via the Incident Action Plan and ICS 202 forms. Personnel: DEQ OSC, 2 DEQ contractors

Wednesday, 1/26/05: Homeowners HOT contractor pulled the tank and lines at 106 First Street and found no evidence of leaking. An exploration hole at the end of the driveway at 104 First Street revealed fuel at the ground water interface indicating it was the likely leaking tank. Several other up gradient potholes showed no fuel contamination run on. The tank was located under an awning and parking slab. The concrete was cut to minimize removal damage. The tank was removed and found to have no integrity. Most seams were rotted out and residual fuel actively released from the tank as it was removed. The decision was made to remove as much of the grossly contaminated soils as possible. A stockpile area was located and an agreement was reached via a decision document for temporary storage off site awaiting lab results. In preparation for contaminated soil removal, 50 CY of clean overburden was removed to a depth of four feet, and stored off site. A press release was issued concerning positive identification of the spill source. Unified Command established activities for Thursday via the Incident Action Plan and ICS 202. Personnel: DEQ OSC.

Thursday, 1/27/05: Hot contractor begins excavation of soil and removal to off site lined and covered storage area. Excavation proceeds to 11.5 feet in depth to groundwater table where red product heating oil infiltrates back into pit. 100 CY of the most impacted soils were removed to the temporary storage area, for later shipment to a permitted PCS disposal site in La Grande Oregon. Further excavation was halted due to RP's inability to pay and questions concerning insurance status. 2000 gallons of oil water mixture was pumped from the sump to facilitate excavation and to clean up source area water. Marty Burke and Associates sampled residuals in the pit for laboratory analysis and report preparation. The contaminated water was to be disposed off site to a permitted WWTU. Clean up of groundwater with pads was continued by the HOT contractor. The site was secured with fencing and barricades. Unified Command established activities for Friday via the Incident Action Plan and ICS 202. ICS to stand down on Friday. Personnel: DEQ OSC.

Friday, 1/28/05: HOT contractor continued padding diesel from the site groundwater and finished the removal of the 100 CY of most contaminated soils. The DEQ SOSC terminates ICS and completes hand off to the DEQ Heating Oil Tank Program for long term remediation and monitoring of site.

Planned Removal Actions

The RP (Carolyn Harshfield) and her attorney continue to investigate responsible insurance companies to fund further cleanup at the site. If a willing insurance company is not found by Tuesday, it is agreed the hole will be filled for safety reasons, and clean up will continue at a later date. Contaminated soils and groundwater will be disposed within 14 days. The oxidation reduction zone is over six feet thick and likely

extends under the home and does extend onto the property next door, with much of it under an existing garage. Estimates by the contractor indicate the cleanup could exceed the value of the home. The sump pump is permanently disconnected eliminating further discharges to the storm sewer and the River. The Mayor and Wallow County Emergency Manager were debriefed and the OSC demobilized back to Bend Oregon. Personnel: DEQ OSC.

Next Steps

The site was referred to DEQ's Underground Heating Oil Program for clean up. Technical Staff assigned to the project will be Judy Coffman, (541)229-5618. Coffman indicates the site is on hold until clean up funds can be secured from Insurance companies. At that time the nature and extent of soil and groundwater will be documented and decisions on required clean up will be made. Mitch Scheel, DEQ will be the Program contact concerning the site.

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