

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
University Place Chemical Removal - Removal Polrep  
Initial and Final Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Region X

**Subject:** POLREP #1  
Initial & Final POLREP  
University Place Chemical Removal  
  
University Place, WA  
Latitude: 47.2168220 Longitude: -122.5477450

**To:**  
**From:** Jeffrey Fowlow, On-Scene Coordinator  
**Date:** 1/21/2016  
**Reporting Period:** 1-19/2016-1/20/2016

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

|                            |              |                                |                |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Site Number:</b>        | 10ZZ         | <b>Contract Number:</b>        |                |
| <b>D.O. Number:</b>        |              | <b>Action Memo Date:</b>       |                |
| <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>         |              | <b>Operable Unit:</b>          |                |
| <b>Mobilization Date:</b>  | 1/20/2016    | <b>Start Date:</b>             | 1/19/2016      |
| <b>Demob Date:</b>         | 1/21/2016    | <b>Completion Date:</b>        | 1/21/2016      |
| <b>CERCLIS ID:</b>         | WAN100100498 | <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 and Time Critical Removal.

#### 1.1.2 Site Description

The site is located in a residential neighborhood of University Place, Washington. The property is comprised of a home, garage and storage shed where the home owner was storing chemicals for a friend who passed away in July 2015.

##### 1.1.2.1 Location

44th Street West, University Place, Pierce County, Washington.

##### 1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

The improper storage of various CERCLA-listed hazardous substances in the garage, shed, and outside at the residence. The homeowner was storing the chemicals for a friend, who died in July 2015. The homeowner, where the chemicals were being stored, was not aware of the danger involved with the chemicals left behind by his friend. Once the homeowner determined that the chemicals may pose a danger he contacted local law enforcement, who then contacted Federal law enforcement agencies and Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology).

On January 19, 2016, Ecology requested assistance from the EPA in order to remove the hazardous chemicals from the residence. Some of the chemicals reported to be at the residence, for example, included sodium metal and hydrofluoric acid, the latter of which is defined as extremely hazardous substances (EHS) under the Federal Environmental Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA). Sodium metal reacts with water causing emission of flammable gases which can cause burns to human tissue and ignite spontaneously. Hydrofluoric Acid is corrosive action on metals and can result in formation of hydrogen gas in containers and piping to create explosion hazard. It is very hazardous if coming into contact with skin or inhaled. Other chemicals secured at the site include: elements or compounds of aluminum, ammonium chlorate and chloride, barium hydroxide, cadmium nitrate, chromium sulfate, hexamethylenetetramine, lithium, magnesium, potassium chlorate, potassium perchlorate, potassium permanganate, sodium chlorate, sodium cyanide, mercuric nitrate, cesium nitrate, strontium, and zinc chloride.

On January 20, 2016, OSCs Jeffrey Fowlow and Brooks Stanfield, four Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team (START), and 5 Emergency and Rapid Response Services (ERRS) personnel arrived at 8218 44th Street West to assess and remove the hazardous chemicals. Other agencies on site were

Ecology, Pierce County Sheriff, Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

### 1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

A preliminary assessment identified over 200 containers of hazardous chemicals, many improperly stored and labeled, and with inadequate security. The homeowner was very interested in having all chemicals belonging to the deceased removed but the homeowner did not have the ability to manage the removal himself.

## 2. Current Activities

### 2.1 Operations Section

#### 2.1.1 Narrative

EPA with START and ERRS contractors met ATF, FBI, Ecology, and Pierce County Sheriff on site on January 20, 2016 at 1100. All personnel performed a site walk under the written consent of the home owner to assess and remove all hazardous substances.

#### 2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

START and ERRS contractors segregated, and secured compatible materials for transportation and disposal by ERRS. EPA and ERRS were given permission by the homeowner to store the drums for transportation and disposal in the garage of the home overnight on January 20 until waste profiles could be generated for shipment.

EPA and ERRS returned to the site on January 21 to pick the drums up for transportation and disposal.

A total of 242 containers of hazardous material were inventoried and secured for disposal.

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

The owner of the chemicals stored at the homeowner's residence died in July 2015. He was also identified as the responsible party at a separate residence in nearby Tacoma, WA and was the responsible party involved in the East 11th Street Chemical Fire emergency response EPA conducted in 2012

#### 2.1.4 Progress Metrics

| Date      | Hazard Class               | Container Total | Overpack Total |
|-----------|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1/20/2015 | Flammable Solid            | 10              | 1              |
| 1/20/2015 | Water Reactive Substance   | 14              | 2              |
| 1/20/2015 | Oxidizing Substance        | 3               | 1              |
| 1/20/2015 | Oxidizing/Toxic Substance  | 22              | 1              |
| 1/20/2015 | Oxidizing/Toxic /Corrosive | 1               | 1              |
| 1/20/2015 | Toxic Substance            | 36              | 3              |
| 1/20/2015 | Corrosive/Toxic            | 1               | 1              |
| 1/20/2015 | Misc Haz Mat               | 5               | 1              |
|           | <b>TOTALS</b>              | <b>92</b>       | <b>11</b>      |

### 2.2 Planning Section

#### 2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

No additional activities are anticipated at this time.

##### 2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

##### 2.2.1.2 Next Steps

#### 2.2.2 Issues

As part of the background investigation for this incident, a separate property in nearby Tacoma, WA was identified as also hosting a potentially large amount of chemicals left by the Responsible Party. This has created the need for a separate emergency response and time-critical removal action led by EPA.

### 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

#### 2.5.1 Safety Officer

#### 2.5.2 Liaison Officer

#### 2.5.3 Information Officer

### **3. Participating Entities**

#### **3.1 Unified Command**

Washington Department of Ecology - Ron Holcomb  
Pierce County Sheriff - Brian Anderson

#### **3.2 Cooperating Agencies**

ATF  
FBI

### **4. Personnel On Site**

EPA FOSC - 2  
ATF - 1  
FBI - 1  
Ecology - 1  
Pierce County Sherriff - 1  
START - 4  
ERRS - 5

### **5. Definition of Terms**

No information available at this time.

### **6. Additional sources of information**

#### **6.1 Internet location of additional information/report**

East 11th Street Chemical Fire Emergency Response (2012): [www.epaosc.org/east11thstreet](http://www.epaosc.org/east11thstreet)

#### **6.2 Reporting Schedule**

### **7. Situational Reference Materials**

No information available at this time.