

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

**Date:** Sunday, April 17, 2005

**From:** Steven Renninger

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Kevin Clouse, Ohio EPA  
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Rick Schriewer, City of Cincinnati  
Dan Rottmueller, CFD  
Chris Hall, MSD

Dave Combs, Ohio EPA  
Patricia Schultz, EPA  
David Chung, EPA  
Don Maccarone, Hamilton County  
Duane Herth, Cincinnati Fire Department  
Carol Ropski, U.S. EPA  
Steven Ostrodka, U.S. EPA  
Mick Hans, U.S. EPA  
Ginny Narsete, U.S. EPA  
Scott Shane, Ohio EPA  
Marshall Hill, ATF  
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Distribution List, National Response Center

**Subject:** Final POLREP  
Queen City Barrel Fire  
1937 South Street, Cincinnati, OH  
Latitude: 39.1075000  
Longitude: -84.5510000

<b>POLREP No.:</b>	4	<b>Site #:</b>	R5ZZ
<b>Reporting Period:</b>	01/03/05 to 04/08/05	<b>D.O. #:</b>	
<b>Start Date:</b>	8/19/2004	<b>Response Authority:</b>	CERCLA
<b>Mob Date:</b>	8/19/2004	<b>Response Type:</b>	Time-Critical
<b>Demob Date:</b>	4/8/2005	<b>NPL Status:</b>	Non NPL
<b>Completion Date:</b>	4/8/2005	<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>CERCLIS ID #:</b>		<b>Contract #</b>	
<b>RCRIS ID #:</b>			

**Site Description**

The Queen City Barrel Response Site consists of a 400,000-square-foot warehouse building at 809 Evans Street in Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio, commonly referred to as the "Lawson Building." E. Paul Corporation owns the Lawson Building. The Site is bordered to the north by Boston Street, to the east by Evans Street, to the south by Whately Street, and the west by Woodrow Street. Queen City Barrel Company (QCB) owns a container reconditioning facility that adjoins the Lawson Building to the north and west. Since at least 1998, QCB has leased the Lawson Building and used it for drum and container storage, fiber drum reconditioning, and equipment and maintenance storage.

On August 19, 2004 at approximately 6:30 p.m., a fire ignited in the Lawson Building. At the time of the fire, the warehouse contained thousands of fiber, plastic, and metal drums and other containers. The fire engulfed the building and blanketed the heavily industrial area west of Interstate 75 in heavy smoke. Explosions were heard every few minutes from inside the building, which began to collapse at 9:20 p.m. on August 19, 2004. More than 20 Cincinnati-area fire departments responded to the fire. By August 20, 2004, 10 fire companies remained on-site to contain the fire.

On August 19-20, 2004, at the request of the Cincinnati Health Department, the U.S. EPA performed downwind air monitoring east of the fire. U.S. EPA air monitoring teams were part of the Cincinnati Chemical Air Monitoring (CAM) team deployed to the fire to determine the extent of airborne contaminants released during the fire. Based on the CAM Team monitoring, the Cincinnati Health Department recommended "shelter in place" for downwind residents on August 19, 2004. CAM Team air samples were laboratory analyzed and detected the following chemicals in the downwind plume: acetone, 2-butanone (methyl ethyl ketone), benzene, toluene, and xylene.

On August 20, 2004, at the request of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms (ATF) and the

Cincinnati Fire Department (CFD), the U.S. EPA conducted air sampling on Whateley Street immediately adjacent to the Lawson Building where the fire was smoldering. Two summa canister samples were collected and sent to a local laboratory for analysis. The following chemicals were detected in the Whateley Street smoke plume: acetone, 2-butanone (methyl ethyl ketone), tetrahydrofuran, heptane, benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, styrene, and xylene. During the August 20, 2004, U.S. EPA sampling investigation, the U.S. EPA's On Scene Coordinator (OSC) Steven Renninger observed numerous drums (>1,000) in areas inside and outside of the Lawson Building. Drums were noted to be burned, partially burned, and in varying stages of deterioration due to the fire, which was still smoldering. OSC Renninger observed drums within the fire area, as well as in other parts of the building that were immediately adjacent to the fire areas. Drums were stacked three high in several areas of the building's upper level, as observed from Evans and Whateley Streets.

On August 20, 2004, the City of Cincinnati, Department of Buildings and Inspections (B&I) issued a notice of violation and order pursuant to the Cincinnati Building Code. The City ordered demolition of the Lawson Building located at 809 Evans Street, and declared it to be a public nuisance.

On August 24, 2004, the U.S. EPA sampled two drums located adjacent to the fire area. The drums were located in Whateley Street as a result of the fire at 809 Evans Street. One of the drums was in deteriorated condition (bulging) at the time of sampling. Laboratory results indicated that the sample denoted as QCB1 was corrosive with a pH=2.2.

Between August 19, 2004 and April 8, 2005, the Queen City Barrel Co performed a drum removal action at the site. A total of 12,971 non-empty drums were removed from areas B-1 through B-6 in the Lawson Building. In addition, 28,436 empty drums were removed from the demolition area.

#### **Current Activities**

Drum removal activities in the Lawson building have been completed. A total of 12,971 non-empty drums were removed from areas B-1 through B-6 in the Lawson Building. In addition, 28,436 empty drums were removed from the demolition area.

Refer to the Disposition of Wastes summary table for an estimate of the volumes of waste shipped off-site for disposal through March 28, 2005.

#### **Planned Removal Actions**

E EI personnel continued drum staging and sampling activities through March 2005. Due to the inclement weather, drum management activities were moved to QCB's Metal Treating Building located at the corner of South Street and Evans Street. Drums were removed from the Lawson building and staged in the Metal Treating building to be sampled and consolidated based upon haz-cat results.

Drum removal and management activities continued through March 29, 2005. All accessible drums were removed from all areas of the building on March 25, 2005. EEI continued drum sampling and haz-cating activities until all drums had been processed.

CEC continued perimeter air monitoring of the work zone. Eight locations were monitored daily with no elevated readings. Air monitoring was also performed daily by EEI in the Metal Treating Building. Work zone and perimeter air monitoring continued until all drum removal activities were completed.

Central Insulation Systems, Inc. (CIS) was hired to perform asbestos abatement work in Buildings B-1 and B-5. CIS started abatement work on February 28, 2005 and completed Building B-1 on March 21, 2005. Additional asbestos containing materials were identified in Building B-5. CIS returned to site to remove these materials during the week of March 28, 2005.

#### **Next Steps**

Allgeier will continue building demolition activities. Demolition is expected to be completed by the end of May 2005 under order of the City of Cincinnati (Buildings & Inspections).

All drum removal activities in the Lawson Building have been completed. CEC will continue to furnish U.S. EPA with certificates of disposal for wastes shipped off-site during drum removal activities.

#### **Key Issues**

Evans Street will remain closed during demolition activities until June 2005.

#### **Disposition of Wastes**

<b>Waste Stream</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Manifest #</b>	<b>Disposal Facility</b>
Flammable Liquids	1,925 gallons		EEI - Cincinnati, OH
Corrosive Liquids / Acid	1,135 gallons		EEI - Cincinnati, OH
Corrosive Liquids / Base	375 gallons		EEI - Cincinnati, OH
Flammable / Corrosive Liquids	475 gallons		EEI - Cincinnati, OH
Oxidizer Liquids	375 gallons		EEI - Cincinnati, OH
Sulfides	740 gallons		EEI - Cincinnati, OH
Chlorinated Liquids	490 gallons		EEI - Cincinnati, OH
Flammable Solids	10 to 15 drums		EEI - Cincinnati, OH
Non-hazardous Solids	25 gallons		EEI - Cincinnati, OH
Hazardous waste (Over-Packs)	235 drums		EEI - Cincinnati, OH
Asbestos Containing Materials	0.77 cubic yards	2861, 2856	Bavarian Landfill - Walton, KY

[response.epa.gov/queencitybarrel](https://response.epa.gov/queencitybarrel)