

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
Pablo Tire Fire 2 - Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Region VIII

**Subject:** POLREP #2  
Pablo Tire Fire 2  
TBD  
Pablo, MT  
Latitude: 47.6345722 Longitude: -114.1125639

**To:**  
**From:** Duc Nguyen, OSC  
**Date:** 4/9/2016  
**Reporting Period:**

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

<b>Site Number:</b>	A8N2	<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 Assessment
<b>NPL Status:</b>	Non NPL	<b>Operable Unit:</b>	n/a
<b>Mobilization Date:</b>	4/8/2016	<b>Start Date:</b>	4/9/2016
<b>Demob Date:</b>		<b>Completion Date:</b>	
<b>CERCLIS ID:</b>		<b>RCRIS ID:</b>	
<b>ERNS No.:</b>	1144742	<b>State Notification:</b>	Yes
<b>FPN#:</b>		<b>Reimbursable Account #:</b>	

1.1.1 Incident Category

Tire Fire

1.1.2 Site Description

On April 8, 2016 a tire fire broke out at the Tire Depot located near Pablo, MT. The facility stores both whole and shredded used automobile tires. EPA responded 15 years ago to a similar event at this facility with roughly 6 million tires involved in that fire. Local Office of Emergency Management (OEM) reported that this fire was as large or larger than the previous one.

1.1.2.1 Location

The facility is located in Lake County, Montana, within the reservation boundaries of the Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation. The Flathead Reservation borders Lake and Sanders counties and is near the towns of Pablo and Ronan.

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

Black smoke is impacting neighboring communities as well as traffic on Highway 93 which runs just to the east of the Site.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

The fire was reported to local officials at 05:35 local time. Both the Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the Lake County OEM requested assistance from EPA.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

EPA OSCs (Nguyen, Sandoval, and Guy) arrived on-scene at approximately 6:30 pm on April 8 and joined incident command. On-site were fire equipment and personnel from the Polson and Ronan fire departments. The on-scene incident commander, Stephen Stanley (OEM, Lake County), provided an update of the situation and the tactics being deployed to suppress the fire. A contractor hired by the owner was hauling soil in from a close borrow area (1/2 mile) for capping operations to smother and put out the

fire. The contractor had three excavators in the borrow area, two bull dozers and a front end loader at the fire, and nine dump trucks.

The fire was on the front face of the landfill, which consisted of a steep surface approximately 50-60 feet high and 1,000 feet long. Soils were being hauled to the top face of the landfill above the fire, dumped, and then pushed with a dozer over the edge. Below, a dozer was pushing soils into a deep pit below the face in order to build up a berm at the base of the fire to hold soils being placed from above. EPA offered assistance and equipment as needed. ERRS arrived with an excavator, dozer, and water truck. OEM asked EPA to standby in case any of the local contractor's equipment broke down.

By 8:00 pm, approximately 95% of the burning face had been capped and extinguished with soil. Several sites mid-level on the face were difficult to cover on the steep slope and were still exposed and flaring. At 10:00 pm the soil hauling operation was stopped for the night for safety concerns. Several Polson fire trucks remained on-site to monitor and cool the uncovered hotspots until morning. With a significant area of the burn face covered, emissions from the site were fairly localized to the pit and surrounding site, with some emissions leaving off-site towards Highway 93.

On the morning of April 9, crews commenced at 7 am with soil hauling and capping activities. START arrived and per OSC direction set up an air monitoring network to monitor particulate emissions in the work zone and outer perimeter of the site. Michael Durglo, from the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, Natural Resources Department, was on-site and requested EPA to provide air monitoring data taken at the site. By 10 am, the lower pit area had been filled and soils were pushed up the slope from the berm to cover the mid-level hot areas. Several exposed small hot spots with visible emissions remained on the capped face. By 12 pm a cap was in place over the entire burn site. No discernable emissions were observable. Both fire departments demobilized soon thereafter. EPA demobilized both ERRS and START. The owner's contractor continued with capping operations, building up the base of the landfill face and bringing the slope out with additional soil placement. Total volume of clayey soil hauled and used for capping was estimated at 6,500 cubic yards. An equivalent amount or more of material was mobilized from sidewalls of the old quarry and used for filling in the pit and base of the landfill face.

During the afternoon, significant truck loads of soil were hauled in and staged on top of the landfill to address flare-up of hot spots should they occur over the next several days.

Inspection of the landfill was conducted again at 3 and 7 pm by EPA. Conditions remained stable. The owner was present at the 3 pm inspection and indicated he would be inspecting the site periodically on Sunday. Stephen Stanley (OEM, Lake County), indicated earlier in the day that he would be returning on Monday to inspect site conditions.

EPA will demobilize on the morning of April 10.

### **2.1.3 Progress Metrics**

Fire has been extinguished. Additional soils continue to be placed on the face of the landfill fire area to ensure fire does not re-start.

## **2.2 Planning Section**

### **2.2.1 Anticipated Activities**

Fire fighting efforts are completed.

#### **2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities**

The responding agencies plan to monitor the site.

#### **2.2.1.2 Next Steps**

EPA's On Scene Coordinator will monitor the situation. Landfill fire is currently out and soils continue to be placed for cover..

### **2.2.2 Issues**

None to report.

## **2.3 Logistics Section**

EPA's Emergency and Rapid Response Services (ERRS) contractor is deploying with an excavator and small bulldozer. EPA's Superfund technical Assistance and Response Team (START) is deploying with air monitoring equipment.

## **2.4 Finance Section**

No information available at this time.

## **2.5 Other Command Staff**

### **2.5.1 Safety Officer**

Health and safety is being managed by local authorities. No issues to report.

### **2.5.2 Liaison Officer**

Local authorities are on the scene.

### **2.5.3 Information Officer**

Local authorities are on the scene. EPA has an Information Officer en route and an Information Officer is providing support in the Region 8 Emergency Operations Center (REOC).

## **3. Participating Entities**

### **3.1 Unified Command**

Local authorities are on the scene and have established a Unified Command. EPA will join the Command once the On Scene Coordinator arrives.

### **3.2 Cooperating Agencies**

Crews from Pablo, Polson, Ronan, and Finley Point fire departments, as well as the Polson rural fire department have been notified. Several of these local agencies are already on-scene.

## **4. Personnel On Site**

EPA has deployed a response Team of three OSCs, two STARTs and an ERRS crew. All personnel are in route and expected to arrive late Friday afternoon and early evening.

## **5. Definition of Terms**

ERRS: Emergency and Rapid Response Services contractor

REOC: Region 8 Emergency Operations Center

START Superfund technical Assistance and Response Team contractor

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

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

[www.epaosc.org/PabloTireFire](http://www.epaosc.org/PabloTireFire)

### **6.2 Reporting Schedule**

The next Situation report will be distributed once EPA's Response Team is on site and has assessed the situation.

## **7. Situational Reference Materials**

Not applicable.