

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
Old Saratoga Hospital (RV2) - Polrep/Sitrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region II

Subject: SITREP #13
Old Saratoga Hospital (RV2)
A-25L
Providence Township, NY
Latitude: 43.1096093 Longitude: -74.0195896

To:
Thru:
From: Paul L. Kahn, OSC
Date: 4/15/2016
Reporting Period:

Executive Summary

The Site is the former Saratoga County Homestead Hospital that opened in 1913 as a tuberculosis sanitarium. It is located on approximately 25 acres about 10 miles west of Saratoga Springs, NY. When a medical cure for TB was discovered the need for sanitariums was eliminated and the hospital eventually closed in 1960. It reopened a few years later as a County senior center but closed in 1979. The property was sold in the 1980s to a developer, but plans fell through and the building was abandoned and fell into total disrepair. Over the intervening years it was a magnet for the occult and thrill seekers who considered the building haunted. Amateur horror movies and You Tube videos were made inside the building. The ground floor windows and doorways were open and the remaining interior walls are covered with graffiti. Inside are rooms with stained mattresses, food containers, beer bottles etc. In 2014 a fire occurred and the structure was partially damaged. Fire department officials toured the building after the fire and discovered friable asbestos pipe and duct insulation, drums and smaller containers of paint and chemicals. To the rear of the main building is a mechanical graveyard with old boilers and pipes with friable asbestos insulation hanging off. The site is located in a State-designated wetlands and is near a creek within the Great Sacandaga Lake Watershed. On May 20, 2015 the site was referred to EPA from the NYSDEC for an assessment and possible Superfund removal action.

In August 2015 an emergency removal action was initiated (RV1) for abandoned chemical containers found in a waste water treatment plant on the Site and also inside the main hospital building. The Site was authorized on 12/31/15 for a CERCLA time-critical asbestos removal action RV2. Removal activities commenced on 1/26/2016.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	A25L	Contract Number:	EP15-S2-02
D.O. Number:	027	Action Memo Date:	12/31/2015
Response Authority:	CERCLA	Response Type:	Time-Critical
Response Lead:	EPA	Incident Category:	Removal Action
NPL Status:	Non NPL	Operable Unit:	
Mobilization Date:	1/25/2016	Start Date:	1/25/2016
Demob Date:		Completion Date:	
CERCLIS ID:	NYN000201779	RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:		State Notification:	

1.1.1 Incident Category

Abandoned former tuberculosis cure hospital with deteriorated friable asbestos insulation inside and outside of the main building.

1.1.2 Site Description

The site is a former Saratoga County hospital used to cure patients who had contracted tuberculosis. It was built in 1912 and consists of a two story steel frame brick main building with a full basement, a former boiler plant, and a former waste water treatment plant (WWTP). The facility was closed in 1962 and subsequently purchased in 1980 by Conifer Construction co., a building company. An attempt was made to rehab the building and put it back into use as a senior citizen residence. Plans fell through and the facility was abandoned in 1982. See Old Saratoga Hospital Site (**RV1**) for additional information and

photos.

1.1.2.1 Location

It is situated in a rural residential area approximately 10 miles west of Saratoga Springs, NY

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

The building contains thousands of linear feet of asbestos pipe insulation, much of which has fallen onto the floors. In another room are approximately 50 yellow asbestos bags filled with friable asbestos. There is some type of pressure vessel in the basement that is partially covered with a 2 inch thick blanket of asbestos insulation; much of the insulation had fallen onto the floor. Inside the main building are mattresses, clothing and children's toys indicating that trespassers have been accessing the building and areas where there is asbestos insulation. Clumps of what appears to be asbestos insulation were seen on the ground outside the main building and asbestos insulation is visible on the remains of two large steam boilers in an outside area behind the main building.

The lure of an abandoned old hospital building has become a magnet for the occult and horror seekers. Trespassers have been entering the building for more than 10 years, and at least three narrated amateur 'home' movies have been filmed there and posted on the Internet.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

See above.

1.2 Incident Objectives

The objective is to continue removing ACM from the main building, bagging the ACM and shipping the waste off-Site to an approved landfill for disposal.

1.3 Critical Resource Needs

Currently, there are no critical resource needs. The personnel, equipment and financial resources are available to complete all activities planned in the next operational period.

1.4 Strategic Considerations

At this point in the response there are no significant strategic considerations beyond ordinary site activities.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

Current information is in bold font.

On August 3 - 5 2015 EPA and it's technical contractor, Weston Solutions, acquired 23 samples of suspected ACM from various locations inside the main building and from 2 locations outside the main building. The samples were sent to a laboratory for analysis. In addition to the sampling the contractor measured the length and diameter of insulated pipes in the basement and first floor in the main building.

On 9/16 EPA and tacs with the EPA removal support contractor, Weston Solutions, flew a drone over the main building at the Site and recorded the physical condition of the roof. The overflight lasted for lasted for about 10 minutes and the drone recorded about 3 minutes of footage of the roof. The overflight confirmed that the roof has collapsed in three places and there are at least a dozen smaller holes in the roof. One section, approximately 10 feet X 20 feet is shown in a dotted outline in what appears to be the beginning of an imminent collapse. RST will overlay the location of the holes and collapsed areas on a scale drawing of the building so that the rooms underneath can be blocked off for H & S concerns.

On 9/17 the OSC met with attorneys for Saratoga County and the Providence Town Supervisor at the Site. The current situation with the site was discussed and the guests were given a brief demonstration of drone ops.

On 9/17 Weston Solutions techs acquired 10 additional samples of suspected ACM. Samples were processed and will be transported to the lab on 9/18 for analysis.

Results of the second 'round of ACM sampling that occurred on 9/16/2015 have been received. This 'round of sampling was done solely on the first floor of the main building. Sample results indicated the presence of Chrysotile asbestos in concentrations ranging from 5.4% to 66.8%.

On 10/6/2015 counsel for Saratoga County informed the OSC that youths were accessing the contaminated main building in increasing numbers. In response to this information the OSC activated the ERRS contractor to initiate site security as follows: subcontract for repairs and upgrade to existing damages perimeter fencing, install plywood panels over doorways and basement windows, and post asbestos warning signs on fence and main building. ERRS contractor expected to be on Site by 10/13/2015.

ERRS contractor mobilized to the Site on 10/13/15 and purchased supplies needed to board up doors and ground floor windows. Work commenced on 10/14/2015 and continued until 10/21/2015. ERRS secured all openings to the main building, boarded up the abandoned caretakers house which had been vandalized, and

also secured the WWTP which had previously contained 31 drums of hazardous substances. The WWTP contains 4 open top, water-filled process tanks which pose a drowning hazard to the public who may access this building. ERRS also cleared underbrush and small trees from around the main building, creating a swath of open space which will make trespassers more visible if they attempt to enter the building. ERRS posted asbestos warning signs at all entrances to the main building and on the perimeter fence.

ERRS is keeping one Tech at the site during daylight hours for security purposes from 10/23 to 10/26, and from 10/30 to 11/2, Halloween weekend. Tech was directed to call 911 if anyone attempts to force entry into the main building.

A trash roll-off will be ordered for the week of 10/26 and debris around the site and caretakers house will be collected for disposal.

Two full 150 pound LPG gas cylinders that were discovered in the weeds two weeks ago were picked up by a local gas supplier at no cost to the Government.

One fence contractor submitted a bid for \$32,000 for fence repairs and upgrades. Bid response being reviewed by OSC. As a possible alternative to the fence contractor, ERRS is providing the OSC with a cost-estimate for in-house fence repairs and upgrades. If this is a more cost-effective way to address the needed fence repairs the ERRS contractor will proceed with its own resources to make the necessary repairs.

Site was secured and demobed at 1100 hours on 10/21/2015.

Action Memo was signed on 12/31/2015. Paperwork associated with putting funding into site account has been processed. Contractor will mobilize crew and equipment to the site on 1/25/2016.

On 1/26/2016 ERRS contractor personnel arrived on the Site. The Town of Providence and Saratoga County assisted site mobilization by supplying sand and rock salt to clear the command post staging area. A skid steer was delivered and used to clear ice and roadway along the rear of the main building. ERRS picked up supplies to complete repairs to perimeter fence. Additional fence supplies will be delivered on 1/27. Arrangements underway to have office and crew trailers to the site by 1/29, porta johns, and temporary generator. Bids for electrician to install temporary pole and meter box issued. Site set up activities will continue through 2/5 when comms are expected to be operational.

ERRS has begun to transfer existing bags of ACM from the basement, through a decon area, into lined roll-offs where they will be staged for off site disposal. The bags are frozen in ice in the basement and are currently difficult to remove without damaging the already fragile bags. ERRS is, in the meantime, beginning to remove ACM pipe insulation until the bags are more easily handled without breaking.

On 3/17/2016 the first two roll-offs containing bagged ACM waste were shipped off the Site. This amounted to almost 50 cubic yards of ACM waste. The waste was transported to an approved asbestos landfill in Seneca County, NY for permanent disposal. In attendance to mark the occasion was a reporter with the *Daily Gazette* who interviewed the OSC and took photographs for the newspaper. Public officials from Providence Township were also present to view the first shipment of asbestos waste.

A chronic problem that we are experiencing at the Site is trespassers and kids trying to break into the main building. Since EPA mobilized to the Site in December the incidents have diminished, mostly to our presence there, but also because we repaired/replaced the fence, cut back underbrush that afforded cover, posted warning signs and sealed ground floor doors and windows, and posted observers at the site at random times on weekends. Similar preventive measures were also implemented at the vacant care-takers house on the site which had been severely vandalized. ERRS will be installing video cameras and hi-intensity lights on the main building, and the County Sheriff's Dept. has been alerted to the situation. The OSC advised the Sheriff that he would sign a trespassing complaint against anyone apprehended on the property. This is the only way to ensure that the public does not access the building and become exposed to asbestos contamination.

ERRS progress to date has resulted in approximately 90% of the ACM being removed from the basement of the main building and staged in double-lined bags in a lined and covered roll-off. The second shipment of 25 cu. yds. of bagged ACM will leave the Site during the week of March 28th for disposal in the Ontario County Land Fill.

The OSC dropped off 100 two-color information flyers at the Galway Jr./Sr. High School and requested that they be distributed to home room teachers and read to the students. The flyer was developed jointly by Region 2 PAD and the OSC. The flyers provide a history of the Site, explain EPA's clean-up goals, and provide basic health information relating to the dangers of exposure to asbestos. The intent was to inform and hopefully help deter youths from trespassing in the building.

A reporter and photographer from the *Daily Gazette*, a newspaper of general circulation in Schenectady NY, visited the site on the occasion of the transporting of the first load of ACM off Site for disposal. Attending the event were two elected officials from Providence Township and OSC Carl Pellegrino. The paper published a news article about the Site and EPA's remediation efforts. A copy of the article can be found in the Documents Section.

ERRS continues to remove ACM from the basement of the main building. The sole area in the basement that has to be addressed is the far East end in what is the newer side of the building. This area is not on the building plans and some of the areas where there is ACM is difficult to access due to partially collapsed walls and a labyrinth of small and odd shaped rooms in that area. ERRS will enter the building from the exterior doors on the east end and will do confined space entries to access ACM in those difficult areas. The basement area is about 95% remediated.

At the direction of the OSC, ERRS established a fenced-off personnel Exclusion Area around the perimeter

of the building where the façade is loose and bricks and other debris are falling.

The OSC brought 100 copies of an informational flyer to the Galway Library, the repository for the Admin Record for this removal action. The flyer was developed jointly with the OSC and staff of the EPA Region II Public Affairs Division. It provides information on the history of the Site, the nature of the EPA removal action, health related information pertaining to asbestos exposure, and contact information for the Site/OSC. Copies of this flyer were also distributed at Town Hall and are available at the Command Post.

The second shipment of ACM left the Site on 4/7/2016, consisting of 30 cu. yds. of asbestos waste. ERRS continues to remove ACM from the basement in the main building. The basement is about 98% finished and ERRS is focusing on removing the remaining ACM from difficult to access basement areas on the north side of the building. This will require a Confined Space Entry into areas with limited access/egress. ERRS crew is reviewing CSE procedures and a CSE permit will be issued prior to entry into affected work areas. Prior to entry, ERRS will use torpedo heaters to melt the 2 inches of ice on the floor in those areas. Air monitoring for CO and O2 will be performed in any area where heaters were operating; this is in addition to routine air monitoring required by a CSE permit.

On 4/7/2016 a subcontracted structural engineer toured the two upper floors of the main building with ERRS to assess the integrity of those areas. His report will photo-document areas of concern from a safety standpoint and make recommendation as to how to reduce/eliminate any risk associated with compromised floors, walls, ceilings etc. The engineer has already identified 3 rooms on the top floor which are unsafe to enter without first making major repairs. However, these rooms do not have any ACM so they will be partitioned-off to prevent entry. During the engineering inspection living quarters were discovered in an area over the main entrance lobby. It is a full apartment accessible only from the roof, and ACM insulation was observed in this area. This ACM will be remediated when ERRS begins work on the second floor of the main building.

No incidents of trespass or vandalism have occurred, indicating that perhaps the word has gotten out that it is unsafe for curiosity seekers to enter the main building.

Electrician will run a second power line to the Decon trailer at a fraction of the cost of renting a second generator. This will allow ERRS to use the existing generator powering the Decon trailer to power additional heaters and lights in the Hot Zone.

New photos of workers in the Hot Zone have been added to the Images section of this web site

On Saturday 4/9/2016 the RM reported to the OSC that two cars were spotted at the Site by ERRS contractor personnel who were monitoring the Site. The monitors took photos of the license plates, one from NYS and one from CT. The drivers had entered the main building but left when they saw the two ERRS monitors. A report was filed with the Saratoga County Sheriff but the deputy taking the report said that it was unlikely that the individuals would appear for what was a ticket offense only. As follow-up to the incident the OSC contacted the Dean of Students at Skidmore College (Saratoga Springs) and was able to confirm that the kids who trespassed were in fact students at the college. The OSC met with the Director of Security and learned that there were 7 students involved, all of which, and their parents, had been contacted by the school and advised to bag the clothes they wore inside the building for disposal. The college brought in their asbestos remediation contractor who will vacuum the student's cars and the common areas where the students went after the Saturday incident. The parents were advised that they will be billed for the cost of the remediation contractor. The OSC gave the Director copies of the public information flyer that has been distributed to the schools near the Site. The Director said he would try to disseminate this information to the rest of the student body. In the aftermath of the incident ERRS boarded up a number of windows on the first floor which had been breached by the students.

ERRS continues to remove ACM from the last area in basement on the north end.

The Site will be temporarily demobilized for the week of April 18th. One ERRS Tech will be at the Site for 4 hours each day to monitor for trespassers.

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

There are a number of known PRPs, including the current owner and one of the former partners of Conifer Construction. Co. Enforcement staff continue to identify additional PRPs.

2.1.4 Progress Metrics

*** = estimated**

Waste Stream	Medium	Quantity	Manifest #	Treatment	Disposal	Date
Chlorine solns.	liquid	15 gals	B of L.	recycled		8/8/15
roofing tar	s/solid	4,000 lbs.	B. of L.	inciner.		9/18/15
WWTP chems.	liquid	41 drums	008864669	various...		9/18/15
amyl formate	liquid	1 drum	008864670	waste wtr.		9/18/15
propane cyls	gas	300 lbs.	n/a	recycled		*10/17/15
ACM	solid	25 cu. yds.	n/a	none	landfill	3/17/16

ACM	solid	30 cu. yds.	n/a	none	landfill	4/7/16

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

It is anticipated that before the end of April ERRS will complete removal activities in the basement area. ERRS will move up to the first floor of the main building and prep the first room for ACM removal.

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

See above. Complete removal of asbestos insulation from the basement and move to first floor to continue ACM removal and staging for disposal. ERRS will seal the windows of each room with poly stapled to furring strips.

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

See above.

2.2.2 Issues

The sole issue is one of accessing the north end of the basement in the main building. Approach from inside the basement is impossible due to a collapsed wall in the end room. ERRS will have to enter the north end of the basement via an exterior door. Work in areas on that end of the building that contain ACM are considered confined spaces and will be dealt with in accordance with all applicable OSHA CSE requirements.

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

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

County of Saratoga

NYSDEC

Providence Township

4. Personnel On Site

8 ERRS contractor personnel

1 EPA OSC

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.