

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

**Date:** Sunday, August 14, 2005  
**From:** James Mitchell / Ken Rhame / Anita Boseman

**Subject:** Watertown Tire Fire  
W 7910 Provimi Road, Watertown, WI  
Latitude: 43.2198390  
Longitude: -88.7874400

<b>POLREP No.:</b>	4	<b>Site #:</b>	B5CG
<b>Reporting Period:</b>		<b>D.O. #:</b>	
<b>Start Date:</b>	7/20/2005	<b>Response Authority:</b>	CERCLA
<b>Mob Date:</b>	7/20/2005	<b>Response Type:</b>	Emergency
<b>Demob Date:</b>		<b>NPL Status:</b>	Non NPL
<b>Completion Date:</b>		<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>CERCLIS ID #:</b>	WIN 000 509 979	<b>Contract #</b>	
<b>RCRIS ID #:</b>			

#### **Site Description**

On July 19, 2005, a tire fire broke out at the Watertown Tire and Recycling facility which is on the northwest side of Watertown, Wisconsin in the town of Shields. The Watertown Tire and Recycling facility is surrounded by Provimi RD to the south, Rich RD to the west, a creek to the east and agriculture to the north. The facility is in a mixed agricultural and residential area.

The fire spread rapidly and no injuries were reported. The fire engulfed the main building and the large tire stockpile in the rear of the facility. Actions taken by operators on site were able to establish a fire break for the chipped tires in the front of the building. There were several explosions on site from fuel tanks located within the building. Roads were blocked off and the Dodge County Health Department asked residents in the vicinity of the fire to close doors and windows and stay indoors (shelter in place). No evacuation order was made. The plume of smoke extended at least 93 miles to the southeast, stretching across Milwaukee and over central Lake Michigan. More than 637 square miles were covered by the plume, including 290 miles of Lake Michigan. The fire was reported to be out on Monday, July 25, 2005.

On July 20, 2005, Wisconsin DNR requested U.S. EPA's assistance in providing air monitoring and air sampling at the fire. U.S. EPA On-Scene Coordinator Mitchell, the Superfund Technical Assistance and Response Team (START), and U.S. EPA's Emergency Response Team (ERT) mobilized to the site to provide air monitoring assistance.

#### **Current Activities**

On August 8, 2005 water treatment operations continue along Hwy 19. Sediment, along with minimal flow rate and low water volume in the drainage ditch are causing the treatment system to be less efficient. Therefore, only a few thousand gallons of water are treated, today. Two effluent samples are collected from the treatment system including a duplicate sample. Additionally, three surface water samples are collected, one from the containment basin north of Provimi Road and adjacent to the burned tire pile; one from the drainage ditch north of Hwy 19, approximately 100 feet upstream from water treatment system intake hose and one from the drainage ditch north of Provimi Road, north of the containment basin. All samples were hand delivered to Test America Laboratory in Watertown, for analysis for VOCs, SVOCs, TAL metals, oil and grease, total suspended solids, pH, and chemical and biochemical oxygen demand. Sample results are expected on Tuesday August 9, 2005. EPA participates in a public meeting held at the Watertown High School.

On August 9, 2005 the water treatment system operated until the drainage ditch was pumped nearly dry. Water treatment operations along Hwy 19 were discontinued and the system was disassembled to move to the staging area along Provimi Road. ERRS water treatment engineer remobilized to the site to assist with the breakdown and reassembly of the water treatment system on Provimi Road by the containment basin.

On August 10, 2005, the water treatment system was moved to the staging area along Provimi Road and

reassembled in preparation for treating the water in the containment basin. ERRS Response Manager remobilized to the site.

On August 11, 2005, final assembly of the treatment system was completed and the system was brought on-line. ERRS crew begins treating water that is contained in the containment basin adjacent to the tire fire burn, north of Provimi Road. Treated water was initially circulated back into the containment basin until system flow rates and chemical feed rates were properly adjusted to meet Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) discharge limits. Approximately 50,000 gallons of water were circulated through the system and discharged back into the containment basin before the effluent was discharged into the draining ditch that flows south under Provimi Road. A fluorescein dye, provided by WDNR, is added to the treated effluent to monitor the flow of effluent downstream. A sample of the treated effluent was collected and submitted to Test America for chemical analysis to determine the effectiveness of the treatment system. Approximately 36,000 gallons of water from the containment basin has been treated to date and discharged to the drainage ditch.

On August 12, 2005, treatment of the water in the containment basin continues. The treatment system is operating at a flow rate of approximately 175 gallons per minute and treating approximately 10,000 gallons of water per hour. Preliminary analytical data for the effluent sample collected on August 12, 2005 indicated that none of the volatile organic chemicals analyzed for were present in the effluent. START personnel collected 3 additional samples of the treated effluent for chemical analysis at the local laboratory and continued to monitor the dissolved oxygen content of the water. The pH and D.O. measurements taken of the effluent indicated that both parameters meet WDNR discharge limits. Approximately 131,000 gallons of water were treated and discharged this date. Approximately 167,000 gallons of water from the containment basin has been treated to date.

On August 13 and 14, 2005, water treatment operations continued at Provimi Road. To date, approximately 380,000 gallons of water have been pumped from the containment basin, treated, and discharged downstream.

#### **Planned Removal Actions**

Continue with water treatment operations.

#### **Next Steps**

Continue treating water in the containment basin and discharging treated effluent into the drainage ditch that flows south from the treatment system. Continue to collect effluent samples to determine effectiveness of treatment system and continue to monitor effluent pH and D.O. concentrations.

#### **Key Issues**

U.S. EPA received a request from resident to sample creek sediment. Currently, this issue will be addressed by WDNR.

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