

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region IV
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Monday, May 15, 2006

From: Perry Gaughan

Subject: Initiation of Fund-Lead Removal Action

Synthron Chemical Fire

305 Amherst Road, Morganton, NC

Latitude: 35.7569000

Longitude: -81.6600000

POLREP No.:	4	Site #:	A4LD
Reporting Period:	5/8/2006-5/12/2006	D.O. #:	
Start Date:	5/9/2006	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	5/8/2006	Response Type:	Time-Critical
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:	NCD982121790	Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

For Site description and background information, refer to previous POLREP.

Current Activities

The following activities occurred during the reporting period:

Since the Emergency Response ended in February, EPA had been pursuing a PRP-lead cleanup action with Synthron. Synthron entered into an Administrative Order on Consent in late March 2006. However, due to Synthron's limited funding and pattern of delay and non-compliance, EPA decided to conduct a fund-lead removal action at the Site. The Fund-lead Action Memo was signed April 28, 2006.

On May 8, 2006 members of ERRS and START mobilized to the Site. The ERRS crew consisted of a PM, 1 operator, and 4 laborers. Also present onsite were 1 START team member and 1 EPA OSC. During this day, the ERRS crew conducted a Site walkthrough and read and signed the Site Health and Safety Plan.

May 9, 2006:

ERRS crews began the process of staging drums to allow for sampling and hazard categorization. Approximate counts were made for the totals of each; 800 drums and 200 totes. Also during this day an accredited asbestos inspector came to the site to conduct a formal asbestos survey of the debris left from the explosion and fire; this survey included the taking of samples from potential asbestos containing material (ACM). The results of the sampling came back later in the week and it was determined that ACM is present in the debris mainly in the form of transite tile. ACM is also present in the elbows of many of the pipes leading around site.

May 10, 2006:

ERRS continued to stage drums during this day. START, with assistance from ERRS, began sampling the 12 frac tanks remaining onsite from the pumping of runoff water. A sample was taken from each tank and sent off for analysis. Once the results come back, a determination can be made for disposal. The Morganton POTW and North Carolina Department of Water Quality have already been notified and are aiding EPA in making its decision.

May 11, 2006:

ERRS finished staging drums and began the process of collecting other various sized containers, placing them on pallets, and staging them as well. START also finished the sampling of the frac tanks.

EPA also met with members of OSHNC to discuss demolition plans for the reactor building. They are interested in being onsite during demolition to be able to identify the items and areas that they need to investigate. CSB is also interested in investigating certain areas further and will send someone to Site as well during demolition. A meeting is going to be held between EPA, CSB, and OSHNC on May 16,

2006 to discuss the demolition work plan.

May 12, 2006:

ERRS began to label the staged drums.

Planned Removal Actions

The following removal activities will be conducted during the next reporting period:

-ERRS will begin the process of sampling each drum and giving those samples to START for hazard categorization.

-A formal demolition plan will be made and demolition will begin.

-More START personnel will begin offsite soil sampling in the ditches along both side of Amherst Dr. and the drainage pathway to Hunting Creek. One or more sediment samples will also be taken from Hunting Creek at the influent of runoff from the Site.

Next Steps

A Media Briefing will be hld on May 17, 2006 in Morganton to alert the public on what EPA is doing onsite and potential timelines.

Key Issues

The ACM poses an issue for the demolition. The demo plan will have to contain provisions for dealing with the ACM. Also, decontamination water will have to be passed through filtration.

Public interest has increased due to the new level of activity onsite.

The relationship between EPA and CSB and OSHNC will need to remain strong to aid them in their investigation while at the same time allowing EPA to conduct its removal action.

response.epa.gov/synthron