

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region III
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Wednesday, March 21, 2007

From: Ruth Scharr

To: Dustin Armstrong, PADEP SERO

Subject: Metro Container Corporation
2nd & Price Street, Trainer, PA
Latitude: 39.8249606
Longitude: -75.3990472

POLREP No.: 47	Site #: 032H
Reporting Period: February 23, 2007 through March 14, 2007	D.O. #:
Start Date:	Response Authority: CERCLA
Mob Date:	Response Type:
Demob Date:	NPL Status: Non NPL
Completion Date:	Incident Category: Removal Assessment
CERCLIS ID #:	Contract #
RCRIS ID #:	

Site Description

The Metro Container Site is located in Trainer, Delaware County, Pennsylvania. The site has a history of industrial use in the form of a chemical production plant and drum reclamation and recycling facility. Stauffer Chemical occupied the site during the years of 1920 until 1959. During that period the site housed a carbon disulfide production plant. From 1963 until 1988 the site ownership transferred to Universal Container Corporation, then later to Metro Container Corporation.

In December 1987, EPA Region III was notified by PADER (PADEP today) of a potential emergency at the site due to the presence of thousands of drums in poor condition and leaking. EPA informed Metro Container of the condition in which the drums were and the need to perform a cleanup. Metro Container ceased operations in 1988. Subsequently that year, Metro failed to initiate cleanup action, prompting a federal response. ERCS constructed a fence around the site to restrict entry and a 300-foot retaining wall to prevent migration of contaminants from the site. In June 1989, a consent agreement was signed between EPA and a Potential Responsible Party Steering Committee to conduct the removal of drums from the abandoned site. Removal activities related to this consent agreement were completed in February 1990. In July 1990, EPA's Criminal Investigation and NEIC conducted an investigation at the site and uncovered 25 drums and 12 drum remnants. These were removed from the site during the period of September 1990 through November 1991. The site remained closed until it was acquired during a sheriff sale by Trainer Industries. Trainer Industries is a services company specialized in industrial painting. Trainer Industries signed a Prospective Purchaser Agreement with EPA at the time of purchase. In 2005, Conoco Phillips refinery (formerly British Petroleum) expressed interest in purchasing the property. They tasked MWH in conducting an assessment of subsurface soils and groundwater. As a consequence of this investigation it was determined the presence of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polychlorinated biphenyl's (PCBs), and metals in groundwater. Several seeps were found on the embankment of Stony Creek. The confluence of Stony Creek to the Delaware River is less than one thousand feet downstream.

Current Activities

On the week of February 23, 2007, the OSC notified via telephone the following state and local Government officials of the upcoming field activities: the Code and Safety Office of the Borough of Trainer, Delaware County EMA, USCG Delaware Bay Sector, PADEP.

On March 1st, 2007, the OSC called Trainer Industries to confirm the beginign of field activities. The OSC and the CIC visited the residential area surrounding the site to determine where to distribute factsheets and how many to distribute on March 6.

On March 5, 2007, the OSC and START met at the site and staked the location of soil borings and groundwater monitoring wells to be installed by the Geoprobe contractor later in the week. All sampling locations were marked and surveyed with a GPS instrument. Representatives from utility companies visited the site to mark utility lines prior to the commencement of work. The OSC dropped-off factsheets at the offices of the Borough of Trainer and Chester Township.

On March 6, 2007, The OSC met with START (3) and the contractor for Conoco Phillips at the ConocoPhillips parking lot prior to proceeding to the location on the refinery property where sediment samples would be collected from Stoney Creek at the confluence of the Delaware River. START attended the additional safety training required to have access to the refinery property. Sediment samples were also collected on the banks of Stoney Creek on the site. The OSC and the CIC distributed factsheets on streets adjacent to the site in the Borough of Trainer and in Chester Township.

On March 7th through Mar 9th, the OSC, START and the Geoprobe contractor completed the following tasks:

- advancement of 15 soil borings, producing 15 surface soil samples and 15 subsurface soil samples,
- installed 10 temporary groundwater monitoring wells,
- collected 4 soil vapor samples.

On March 7, 2007, the Code Enforcement Officer for the Borough of Trainer assisted the OSC in obtaining the property owner for the property adjacent to the site in order to collect upstream samples of Stoney Creek.

On March 8, 2007, representatives from the USCG Delaware Bay Sector visited the site to get an update on field activities.

On March 12th through March 14th, the OSC, START and the Geoprobe contractor completed the following tasks:

- advancement of 9 soil borings and soil sampling of each,
- construction of 6 temporary groundwater monitoring wells (including the reconstruction of 1 well),
- sampling of the remainder of the wells (11 this week, 4 last week – total of 15 wells constructed and sampled),
- breakdown of decon pad and staging of drums (8 drums total – 4 containing purge/decon water; 1 soil cuttings; 3 of debris [acetate sleeves, PPE, poly sheeting]),
- shipment of samples, with the exception of those designated for PCB congener analysis to be shipped later, and
- GPS marking of the 5 additional soil borings located between the embankment and Stony Creek.

The borings advanced along Stony Creek were similar to those collected elsewhere in the former lagoon area. There was a visible oily sheen at depth in a couple of the borings, and they appeared to be as impacted as the other areas within the former lagoon area. One well was constructed among these borings at a location in line with the seeps found in Stony Creek, and this was one of the two wells designated for PCB congener analysis. The other well was former 05-MET-114, which previously contained high levels of PCBs.

Trainer Industries was notified of the need to return within 2 weeks to pull the well casings and properly abandon the boreholes, and EPA will return within 90 days to remove the drums of purge water and waste following receipt of analytical data and award of a disposal contractor. The drums are staged on pallets and labeled as Investigation-Derived Waste.

Next Steps

EPA will return to the site within two weeks to pull the well casings and abandon the boreholes. EPA is securing laboratory services for PCB congener analysis. Also, EPA will return to the site to remove the drums with Investigation Derived Waste and dispose them properly offsite. A trip report will be prepared once the results from the laboratory have arrived. A review of these results will be conducted to determine if a threat to human health and the environment.