

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region VII
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Saturday, September 27, 2003

From: Davis, Garvey, Nold

To: Robert Sink, City of Omaha
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Kevin Mould, U.S.E.P.A.
Robert Stewart, Department of the Interior
Eric Jenkins, Fed. Emerg. Mgmt. Agency

Subject: Initiation of action
Omaha Lead Site
Greater Omaha Nebraska Area, Omaha, NE
Latitude: 41.2033000
Longitude: -95.9308000

POLREP No.:	1	Site #:	NESFN0703481
Reporting Period:	09/25/2003-09/27/2003	D.O. #:	0006
Start Date:		Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	9/25/2003	Response Type:	Time-Critical
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:	NESFN0703481	Contract #	68-S7-02-04
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

The Site is located in the Omaha metropolitan area and encompasses Council Bluffs, Iowa, Carter Lake, Iowa, and east Omaha. It is centered around downtown Omaha, Nebraska. ASARCO Incorporated (ASARCO) operated a lead refinery at 500 Douglas Street in Omaha, Nebraska, for over 100 years beginning in the 1870s. The operation of the refinery ceased in 1997. As a routine part of the refinery operation, lead particles were emitted into the atmosphere at the refinery. In addition, the Gould Incorporated lead battery recycling plant was located at 555 Farnam Street in Omaha and was a secondary smelter of lead from discarded lead batteries. The blast furnace used to smelt the lead at the Gould plant emitted lead particles into the air from that refinery. The Gould plant closed in 1982. Several other facilities in the Omaha area used lead in their manufacturing processes. A few of these included Carter White Lead at 21st and Locust Streets which produced white lead paint bases and red lead and litharge protective coatings until 1936, Omaha Shot and Lead which later became Lawrence Shot and Lead, and then became National Lead Company which manufactured lead shot by melting pig lead, Grant Storage Battery Company, Storage Battery Factory, and Exide Corporation which manufactured lead storage batteries. Numerous other locations in the Omaha area such as foundries, iron works, metal salvaging companies and other manufacturers used or processed lead at their facilities.

In May 1998, Mr. Frank Brown, President of the Omaha City Council, sent a letter to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requesting the assistance of the EPA in addressing problems with lead contamination in the Omaha area. The EPA initiated a process to investigate the lead contamination using authority under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 9600, et seq., more commonly known as the Superfund Law.

Current Activities

There are two concurrent actions being implemented at the Omaha Lead Site. Separate PolReps are being developed for each action. The first action has and will continue to address those locations that are either day care facilities or where a child under the age of 7 is found to have an elevated blood lead level. Activities in this PolRep describe the actions being taken at addresses where the highest lead in soil concentrations have been identified. Currently, that value is 2,500 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg).

Activities were initiated under this second action this week. Currently, 39 residences have been identified with a lead in soil level above 2,500 mg/kg. Removal activities were begun at two residences.

Planned Removal Actions

Remediation will continue under this action at residences where at least one lead in soil value is greater than 2,500 mk/kg.

Key Issues

Prior to initiation of this new action, ERRS developed separate spreadsheets to monitor cost and time to accomodate individual 1990s for the two actions.

response.epa.gov/OmahaLeadPhaseIV