

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

Date: Saturday, October 18, 2003

From: Davis, Garvey, Nold

To: Robert Sink, City of Omaha
Todd Davis, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality
Bahnke Donald, U.S.E.P.A.
Kevin Mould, U.S.E.P.A.
Eric Jenkins, Fed. Emerg. Mgmt. Agency

Gordon Andersen, Missouri River Treatment Plant
Michael Arends, Missouri River Treatment Plant
Bryant Burnett, U.S.E.P.A.
Robert Stewart, Department of the Interior

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

POLREP No.:	4	Site #:	NESFN0703481
Reporting Period:	10/14-18/2003	D.O. #:	0006
Start Date:	9/25/2003	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

Currently, there are a group of thirty-nine residential properties that are in-work. All of these properties exceed the non-foundation soil concentration of lead greater than 2,500 mg/kg.

Progress this week was hampered by a short work week, excessive rain from the previous weekend and during the week, and a rentor at a property that continuously attempted to interfere with the crew. Heavy rain from the last weekend allowed extensive erosion of backfilled yards that had not yet been sodded. Much time and effort was given to repairing washout areas and cleaning up mud from sidewalks and driveways.

Attached is a table that lists the work progress for this reporting period and project totals.

Planned Removal Actions

The plan is to continue the implementation of this removal action that includes excavating lead contaminated soil from residential properties with one or more non-foundation soil concentrations greater than 2,500 mg/kg.

Continued activities are being centralized from the Missouri River Treatment Plant located at 5600 S 10th Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68107-3501. The city of Omaha has partnered with EPA to allow the use of a portion of the facility.

Next Steps

Once the current group of 39 properties has been completed there is another group of 10 homes where children with elevated blood-lead levels live that EPA will immediately implement clean-up activities. This additional group is funded under a separate removal action for the Omaha Lead Site.

Key Issues

One property owner has denied EPA property access for a residential location that was greater than 2,500 ppm for a non-foundation sample. EPA will continue to communicate with the property owner to attempt to gain access to the lead contaminated residence.

EPA is in the process of amending this action memo to include properties with non-foundations concentrations greater than 1,200 ppm to be eligible for removal.

response.epa.gov/OmahaLeadPhaseIV