

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region VI
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Tuesday, August 14, 2007

From: Gary Moore

To: Ragan Broyles, Response and Prevention Scott Thompson, Oklahoma DEQ
Branch

Subject: Initiation of Action
McAlester Mercury
1012 N. G Street, McAlester, OK
Latitude: 34.9432000
Longitude: -95.7796000

POLREP No.:	1	Site #:	
Reporting Period:	08/14/2007	D.O. #:	
Start Date:	8/13/2007	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	8/14/2007	Response Type:	Emergency
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	
CERCLIS ID #:		Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

On August 13, 2007, a representative from Country Home Health Inc. contacted the McAlester Fire Department to report seeing mercury in the home of an elderly patient in McAlester, Oklahoma. The Fire Chief contacted the National Response Center (#845467) to make a formal report after visiting the residence and observing free mercury on the floor inside the house.

Current Activities

On August 14, 2007, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mobilized to investigate the possible release of mercury in the residence. Upon arrival, EPA representatives coordinated with local police and fire department officials. EPA representatives made entry inside the home to conduct air monitoring and to visually confirm the presence of mercury. Air monitoring was conducted with a RA-915+ Lumex Mercury Analyzer which is equipment capable of monitoring levels of mercury vapors in nanograms per cubic meter.

Air monitoring results within the residence indicated mercury levels present in excess of 40 µg/m³. A substantial amount of free mercury was observed in the bedroom; the mercury air level was 80 µg/m³. The temperature inside the home was approximately 77 degrees F and fans were placed throughout the house to assist in lowering the ambient mercury air levels. Items that occupants wanted to take with them before they departed the house were monitored to ensure safety. The occupants' shoes were the only items that were unsafe and could not be removed from the house. The local Red Cross was contacted to assist the occupants of the house purchase shoes.

EPA Representatives also conducted air monitoring in the homes of relatives who had recently visited with the occupants of the contaminated residence. All readings were at background levels and required no further action. EPA also requested by the City of McAlester to conduct air monitoring around the sanitation department trucks that may have been used to collect trash from the contaminated residence. The mercury air levels from the sanitation department trucks were observed not to be above background levels.

The residential screening level for mercury contamination is 10 µg/m³.

EPA OSC Leo mobilized to Onapa, OK to visit with the owner of the contaminated house. The owner of the house signed an access agreement form, allowing EPA to conduct a removal action inside the contaminated residence.

Planned Removal Actions

Mobilize EPA ERRS contractor to begin to remediate of mercury from the residence.

Next Steps

EPA will continue to coordinate with state and local officials.

Key Issues

At least one employee from Country Home Health Inc, may be potentially exposed to mercury while cleaning and vacuuming inside the residence over a period of time.

The Fire and Police Department accompanied the EPA at the residence due to the reported hostile nature of one of the occupants.

Currently the occupants of the residence are staying at relatives' houses.

response.epa.gov/McalesterMercury