

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

**Date:** Monday, September 24, 2007

**From:** Chris Ruhl

**Subject:** Completion of Emergency Response Activities and Final POLREP

Agrifos Acid Spill

2001 Jackson Street, Houston, TX

Latitude: 29.7458000

Longitude: -95.3647000

<b>POLREP No.:</b>	7	<b>Site #:</b>	06LD
<b>Reporting Period:</b>	9/22 - 9/24/2007	<b>D.O. #:</b>	
<b>Start Date:</b>	9/7/2007	<b>Response Authority:</b>	CERCLA
<b>Mob Date:</b>	9/6/2007	<b>Response Type:</b>	Emergency
<b>Demob Date:</b>		<b>NPL Status:</b>	
<b>Completion Date:</b>	9/24/2007	<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>CERCLIS ID #:</b>	TXN00606820	<b>Contract #</b>	
<b>RCRIS ID #:</b>			

#### Site Description

On 9/6/2007, EPA's R6 Emergency Response Team was notified of an ongoing release from Agrifos Fertilizer Inc. located at 2100 Jackson Road, Pasedena, TX. The National Response Center (NRC) has assigned the incident NRC # 847936. The release occurred when a retaining wall failed resulting in the discharge of process water from a large gypsum mound. The discharge is reported to exhibit a pH of 2, contain sulfuric and phosphoric acids, and metals. The USCG has confirmed a fish kill associated with the release with a noticeable "dead" zone. The RP has estimated that 10 million gallons of process water has been discharged since the incident began. It is estimated approximately 6 million gallons of process water has been pumped and discharged within the past two days. This discharge was pumped by the responsible party (RP) to reduce hydraulic pressure on the retaining wall and provide additional capacity for future rain events. The RP has requested an emergency discharge permit for the discharge from the Texas Commission of Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Currently, the release is an un-permitted discharge from the facility to Cotton Patch Bayou and then into the Houston Ship Channel.

It is estimated that 25-35 million gallons of process water is contained behind the retaining wall. An additional 175 million gallons of process water is contained within the impoundments located on the top of the gypsum mound. The RP is concerned about the potential catastrophic release of either of the impoundments. The facility has had similar releases from the facility in the past.

The USCG, TCEQ, and Harris County Pollution Control were responding to the incident.

#### Current Activities

Emergency operations are now complete and the site will be transitioned to EPA RCRA enforcement Project Manager, Agatha Benjamin.

On 09/23/2007 pH monitoring results indicated that the soda ash treatment of the residual contamination within the Harris County drainage ditch and Cotton Patch Bayou had been successful and treatment was suspended. Agrifos will continue for the near future to flush these areas with fresh water and monitor pH.

As of 1220 hours on 09/24/2007 Agrifos has completed the partial treatment and purging of the raw process water derived from the emergency removal through its wastewater treatment facility. The facility is now in normal operation mode and compliant with its TPDES discharge permit. As discussed in previous POLREPS, the emergency removal derived process water was diverted to the waste water treatment facility as soon as practicable to gain some treatment of the process water prior to discharge into the Houston Ship Channel. After critical freeboard levels were attained, the process water from the gypsum stacks was diverted back into normal operations and the remaining stock piled response related process water was isolated into Moat #1. This stock piled process water was partially treated in the waste water treatment plant prior to discharge. After completion of the partial treatment of the stock piled process water, the system had to be purged with approximately 8 million gallons of fresh water to bring the

facility back into normal operational mode and compliance with its TPDES permit.

Agrifos and its contractor continue to repair the retaining wall where the initial breach occurred and secondary seeps. Seep repairs include installing a steel plate over the impacted area.

**Planned Removal Actions**

None at this time. All emergency CERCLA operations have been completed

**Next Steps**

Transition from CERCLA authority to RCRA authority under the modified UAO.

[response.epa.gov/Agrifos](https://response.epa.gov/Agrifos)