

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region V
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Friday, November 14, 2003

From: Brian Kelly

To: J El-Zein, EPA

W Messenger, EPA

Subject: Explosion at the Perma-Fix TSD, Brownstown
Perma-Fix Emergency Reponse
18550 Allen Road, Brownstown, MI

POLREP No.:	1	Site #:	552
Reporting Period:		D.O. #:	
Start Date:	11/13/2003	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:		Response Type:	Emergency
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	
Completion Date:	11/14/2003	Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:		Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

The PermaFix facility operates as a waste treatment center for hazardous and non-hazardous waste materials. Waste is treated, stabilized, and land filled on-site.

Current Activities

0545 an explosion destroyed the western side of the Perma-Fix mixing building. A crane operator inside the building at the time of the explosion was treated for hearing loss. The cause of the explosion is believed to have been hydrogen gas created by the improper treatment of aluminum past with mineral spirits, and water. The Brownstown Fire Department (FD) responded, found the fire to be contained, and closed Allen Road (two business were affected).

0815 U.S. EPA air monitoring support was requested. U.S. EPA was on site at 0905.

OSC Kelly and Brownstown Fire Chief Drouillard convened an "all-hands" meeting at the facility to discuss the current status of the emergency, as well as possible strategies for addressing the emergency. During this briefing, the facility operators provided information on the contents of the bins in the Cure Building.

U.S. EPA and PermaFix employee Jacob Allen initiated air monitoring in the area of the Cure Building. Air monitoring included: a Lumex, a MultiRAE multi-gas meter, a Personal Data RAM dust monitor, and (4) Drager tubes capable of sampling for arsenic, cyanide, chromic acid, xylene, toluene, and acid vapors. The monitoring revealed low levels of cyanide.

In addition to the initial round of monitoring, PermaFix employee Jim Presley collected an air sample, via Summa cannister, which was sent to Trinity Laboratory.

OSC Kelly directed PermaFix to continue the air monitoring on a 1/2 hour basis through the night of 12 November and the morning of 13 November. Chief Drouillard and OSC Kelly agreed Allen Road could be reopened, while access to the building would remain restricted.

On 13 November U.S. EPA conducted an additional round of air monitoring with the MultiRAE multi-gas meter and Drager tubes. All readings were negative. The reaction stopped.

Results from the Summa canister sample showed no elevated levels.

Planned Removal Actions

None.

Next Steps

The emergency phase is complete. U.S. EPA air monitoring and laboratory summa results did not show

high levels of organics, inorganics, or acids. The reaction has stopped.

Perma-Fix and Michigan OSHA is investigating the cause.

response.epa.gov/perma-fix