

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region IV
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Monday, March 17, 2008

From: Randy Nattis

Subject: Columbia Organic Chemical Company
912 Drake Street, Columbia, SC
Latitude: 33.9822000
Longitude: -80.9586000

POLREP No.:	3	Site #:	A4NH
Reporting Period:		D.O. #:	
Start Date:	1/7/2008	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	1/7/2008	Response Type:	Time-Critical
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:		Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

The Columbia Organic Chemical Company (COCC) site is located at 912 Drake Street in Columbia, Richland County, South Carolina. The site is a three acre property surrounded by a mixture of residential and commercial properties. The site is bounded to the northwest by Drake Street, to the southwest by Bruce Street, to the east by residential properties along True Street, and to the north by the former M.B. Kahn Construction Company property. Several multi-unit residences and one single dwelling home are located within 50 yards of the site across Drake Street.

COCC owned and operated a specialty chemical facility from the 1944 until 1984 at which time the operation was relocated to the Cassatt community in Kershaw County, South Carolina. A wide variety of chemicals were produced at the facility, including insecticide formulations, industrial cleaners, and small quantities of specialty chemicals for use in research. Several hundred chemicals were manufactured at the plant. The primary product lines included bromine, iodine substituted aliphatics, mercaptans, alkyl phosphonates, nitriles, and dimethyl sulfide.

The original plant was destroyed by fire in 1958. The plant was subsequently rebuilt on its original location; however, over the years several other fires damaged various parts of the facility. During the course of the facility's operation, Records suggest that soils on the site were contaminated by waste materials which were spilled, dumped, or buried on-site. Records suggest that during the 1970's COCC installed a chemical holding tank, or sump, to collect liquid wastes. Records suggest that much of the waste collected in the tank eventually leaked out.

Current Activities

Based on the Removal Site Evaluation (RSE), six (6) dioxin contaminated grids were excavated to varied depths and stockpiled on site waiting for confirmation excavation sample results. Based on the analytical results of the confirmation samples, further excavations will be required. 5 side wall samples and 2 areas underneath removed concrete pads are above the Removal Action Limit (RAL) of 1 part per billion (ppb). During the removal action, a number of amber jars, 1 drum and 1 cylinder were unearthed. The cylinder was empty as well as the drum, but the amber jars contain an unknown liquid. There was staining around jars as well as an over powering odor. The liquid and the soil around the jars were sampled and sent off for analysis.

Planned Removal Actions

Further assessment will be required to address the 5 side wall samples. The sidewall locations are adjacent to the M.B. Kahn Construction property which was found to be below the RAL during the RSE. Once the remainder of all the dioxin contaminated soils are excavated, the off site disposal will begin. At the completion of disposal, further assessments may be needed based on the results of the soil and liquid waste samples in and around the amber jars found during the excavation. There has been a lot of hearsay of widespread illegal dumping / burial on site and possibly the M.B. Kahn Construction property, therefore, a geophysical survey and possibly trenching may be necessary.

Next Steps

Waiting on sample results.

A public meeting is tentatively planned for April 15th.

Key Issues

Unknown wastes in unearthed Jars.

response.epa.gov/COCC