United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region VI
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Thursday, November 20, 2008
From: Eric Delgado

Subject: Continuation of Removal Oprations
Big Tex Grain
354 Blue Star St, San Antonio, TX
Latitude: 29.4050000
Longitude: -98.4920000

POLREP No.:	6	**Site #:**	A628
Reporting Period:	11/13/2008 thru 11/19/2008	**D.O. #:**	
Start Date:	11/5/2008	**Response Authority:**	CERCLA
Mob Date:	11/5/2008	**Response Type:**	Time-Critical
Demob Date:		**NPL Status:**	Non NPL
Completion Date:		**Incident Category:**	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:	TXN000606634	**Contract #**	EP-W-06-042
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

The former Big Tex Grain Site is located on a 7.5-acre lot in San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas, at 328 Blue Star Road. The geographic center of the site is located at Latitude 29.405° North Longitude -98.492° West.

The Big Tex Grain Site has historically been associated with industrial activity, including operating a vermiculite exfoliation plant, grain production, and sawdust warehousing. The EPA Region 6 office performed an assessment of the subject property to determine potential impact to human health and the environment based on the transporting of vermiculite from Libby, Montana, to the W. R. Grace vermiculite exfoliation plant in San Antonio, Texas. The property has been listed in the EPA CERCLIS database since 2000.

The site consists of approximately 32 structures including the Big Tex grain elevators and warehouses on the eastern portion of the property. To the north-northwest of the site, there are numerous grain silos that were converted into office spaces. The site is bounded to the south and west by Union Pacific railroad tracks and to the north and east by the San Antonio River. The site is secured by a chain link and barbwire fence extending around the entire perimeter of the facility. Within the facility exposed soil areas are heavily vegetated, but still accessible. The Big Tex Grain Site is scheduled to be developed into a "Mixed Use" facility.

Current Activities

Throughout this reporting period, USEPA, START, and ERRS contractors continued removal operations within the identified grids on the Big Tex property. Excavated soil has been loaded into roll-boxes or staged and covered daily on site. To date, 17 grids have been successfully excavated.

Throughout removal operations, soil samples have been collected from the four primary areas of concern. These samples were analyzed for the presence of asbestos and/or vermiculite by an on site microscopist. The finding of the initial removal sampling revealed that 19 additional grids showed the presence of asbestos and/or vermiculite; bring the amount of grids to be excavated to 45.

During all site operations, continuous on site and off site air monitoring has been conducted. Constant dust suppression operations have shown to be effective, and no site operations have generated dust levels that have exceeded site action levels. An air monitoring report is generated daily and sent to the major new paper for the San Antonio area.

Due to high frontal winds, site operations were closed on 11/15/2008. Site operations continued the following day once winds died down and dust suppression operations could be properly executed.

Planned Removal Actions

Removal operations will continue until 11/25/2008, at that time the site will close for the Thanksgiving holiday. Site operations will resume 12/02/2008. Throughout all removal activities, EPA will provide the local resident and the media with updated removal progress maps and air monitoring results.

Next Steps

Removal operations will continue throughout the site. Once operations begin to take place around the former process area, the buildings scheduled to be cleaned out will be sealed up to insure that external removal operations will not further impact the structures in question. Upon completion of grid excavations, the removal crew will power wash the two buildings determined to have unacceptable levels of asbestos. That water will be collected and filtered. The remaining water will be tested and discharged into a municipal sewer.

Key Issues

The main issue regarding removal operations at the site is the suppression of all dust during removal activities. A power washer and a water truck will be constantly utilized to knock down dust. During the removal phase, START will continue particulate monitoring at the removal locations, as well as perimeter and off site particulate monitoring.

Due to the time of the year, winter cold fronts pose an issue as they generate high winds. During such conditions site operations are closed down until winds have subsided and site generated dust can be properly controlled.

response.epa.gov/BigTex