

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region II
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Tuesday, January 27, 2009
From: Paul L. Kahn, Michael Hoppe

To: Andrew Raddant, Department of Interior Lisa Levy, OSHA
William Molnar, Sandy Alexander Albert Greco, City of Clifton
Denise Zeno, USEPA Angela Carpenter, USEPA

Subject: SPECIAL #8: First Confined Space Entry into Shipping Container
Abrachem Chemical
2 Peekay Drive, Clifton, NJ
Latitude: 40.8306000
Longitude: -74.1231000

POLREP No.:	16	Site #:	A212
Reporting Period:	01/24/09-01/27/09	D.O. #:	072
Start Date:	1/2/2009	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	12/30/2008	Response Type:	Time-Critical
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:	NJR000031831	Contract #	EP-W-04-055
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

At 1615 hours on 10/29/08 EPA received a notification from the NRC that a chemical release was occurring at Abrachem Chemical, a bulk chemical packaging facility that leased a building in Clifton, Passaic County, NJ. The NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection was on-scene and requested EPAs presence.

At 1730 hours OSC Ellen Banner and OSC Paul Kahn responded to the scene. The company was found to be storing drums and bulk containers of known and unknown chemicals in 17 56-foot long intermodal shipping carriers (ISCs), stacked 3 tiers high (approx. 35 feet). Only 5 of the ISCs could be opened, and inside those it was observed that drums and bulk containers were staged behind tiers of empty poly drums, giving the impression that the ISCs were used for new drum storage. EPA observed that in the one ISC where the release originated at least one drum was leaking its contents onto a wooden pallet; strong chemical odors emanated from the open door of the ISC and were also pervasive in the general area.

The Operator of Abrachem retained the services of a remediation company, and contractor personnel were advised to lay poly sheeting and begin removing and overpacking the leaking and unknown drums that were readily accessible. Work commenced almost immediately, but at 2100 hours was halted due to lack of adequate lighting and inability to physically access the majority of the drums through the narrow doorway.

The Operator of Abrachem and the Owner of the property was issued a Field Expedient Notice, and in response the Operator stated he would initiate a removal action. When his efforts to respond to the release, and threats of a release, proved to be inadequate EPA sought voluntary access to initiate a response action. This access was denied on two occasions. On 12/4/2008 EPA issued a Unilateral Administrative Order (UAO) for access. The Operator refused to comply with the UAO and EPA referred the matter to the Department of Justice for a legal remedy. On 1/8/2009 a federal Magistrate issued an access warrant to EPA to initiate a response action at the Site.

Current Activities

EPA, RST, and ETI continued operations at the Abrachem Chemical Site.
Crews started the initial confined space entry into the first two of 15 Intermodal Shipping Containers

(ISC) and relocated drums to the designated staging area. Containers were over packed as necessary. Each container was given an ID number and photographed. Also, a description (markings, labels, condition) of each container was logged by personnel and entered into Drum Trak data system.

Haz Cating of unknown materials has commenced.

GE will be picking up approximately 85 containers of waste O-Cresol and transporting them for disposal at no cost to the Government.

Officials from DEC, Clifton OEM, OSHA took tours of the Site. Staff of EPA-CD was on site to video and photograph site activities.

A spill occurred in one of the ISCs and an oil-like material has leaked onto the ground. ERRS applied sorbent pads and boom to contain the spill.

Planned Removal Actions

Continue to remove drums of waste chemicals from the ISCs and move to prepared staging areas inside building.

Continue haz-cating activities.

Next Steps

See above.

Key Issues

See above.

response.epa.gov/abrachemchemical