

Pollution Abatement Services

New York

EPA ID#: NYD000511659

EPA REGION 2 Congressional District(s): 24

Oswego

Oswego

NPL LISTING HISTORY
Proposed Date: 10/1/1981
Final Date: 9/1/1983

Site Description

The 15.5-acre Pollution Abatement Services (PAS) facility, which served as a chemical waste incineration facility from 1970 to 1977, consisted of three lagoons containing more than a million gallons of oil and mixed hydrocarbons, several aboveground and underground storage tanks containing contaminated waste oil, and more than 15,000 leaking and deteriorating drums. Throughout the operation of the facility, PAS experienced operational problems and was cited for numerous air and water quality violations by state and federal agencies. From 1973 to 1976, lagoon overflows and liquid waste spills were common, releasing wastes into the adjacent Wine Creek, which flows into Lake Ontario. In response, the U.S. Coast Guard, EPA, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) performed a number of emergency cleanup activities at the site. Following the closure of the facility in 1977, all hazardous wastes were removed.

Approximately 24,000 people reside within 3 miles of the site. The immediate area is sparsely populated and is zoned primarily for commercial and industrial activity. The Oswego municipal water treatment plant has a surface water intake system on Lake Ontario approximately 1 mile from the point where Wine Creek enters the lake. Municipally-supplied water has been made available to residents, but several have opted to continue using private wells.

Site Responsibility: This site was addressed through federal, state, and potentially responsible parties' actions.

Threat and Contaminants

The on-site ground water is contaminated with various heavy metals and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). The on-site soil is contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Sludges are contaminated with PCBs and heavy metals. The potential exists for health risks if contaminated ground water is ingested or touched.

Cleanup Approach

This site was addressed in four stages: immediate actions and three long-term remedial phases focusing on the cleanup of surface contamination, the entire site, and off-site contamination.

Response Action Status

Immediate Actions: Over a 10-year span, numerous immediate cleanup activities to reduce the threat to the public and the environment were undertaken. In 1976, EPA constructed a dike to prevent an overflow of contaminants from entering the ground water and soil in the surrounding area. In 1977, EPA treated and discharged the contaminated water from the lagoons. A fence with a locked gate was constructed around the site in 1980 to keep unauthorized individuals from entering. That same year, EPA over packed and relocated 500 drums on-site. An additional 1,200 drums were over packed in 1981, and surface runoff controls were installed. The site was covered with a clay cap, topsoil, and vegetation.

Surface Contamination: In 1982, EPA removed the site's superstructures and approximately 10,000 drums of contaminants from the site. In 1987, 500,000 gallons of contaminated ground water were pumped from the site and sent off-site for treatment.

Entire Site: A ROD was signed on July 6, 1984. The selected remedy included the following: (1) limited excavations and removal of contaminated soil, as well as the removal of subsurface tanks and remaining drums to an EPA-approved landfill; (2) containment of the wastes through the construction of an impermeable cap, perimeter slurry wall and leachate collection; (3) on-site treatment of the leachate and contaminated ground water; and (4) ground-water monitoring. These

remedial activities were conducted by NYSDEC and, with the exception of the on-site treatment system, were completed in 1986. In September 1991, EPA and a group of PRPs entered into an interim leachate and ground-water removal administrative order on consent (AOC). This AOC requires the routine removal of leachate and ground water from within the containment system until a permanent treatment system is constructed. The extracted leachate and ground water (approximately 10,000 gallons every month) is currently transported to an EPA-approved treatment and disposal facility.

Post-Closure Investigations: Since the construction of the containment system, various post-closure investigations indicated the presence of VOCs in the ground water outside of the containment system. Under EPA supervision, the PRPs completed an RI/FS to determine the nature and extent of this ground water contamination and to identify remedial alternatives. The investigation was completed in the fall of 1993. A ROD was signed in December 1993. The selected remedy to address this contamination problem includes, among other things, enhancing the present source control system by optimizing operating parameters, bedrock ground-water extraction and treatment, and connecting downgradient residents in the Smith's Beach area, who are using residential wells, to the public water supply to ensure that potential future exposure to contaminants in the bedrock ground water does not occur. A Phase I Supplemental Pre-Remedial Design Study to evaluate the potential effectiveness of bedrock pumping to contain impacted ground water in the bedrock outside the containment system, and to determine potential impacts of bedrock ground-water pumping on the existing containment system and the creeks and wetlands was completed in 1994. It was determined that pumping of the bedrock groundwater was not necessary and perhaps not even possible without impacting the adjacent wetlands. A Phase II Supplemental Pre-Remedial Design Study, completed in September 1996, concluded that the Pollution Abatement Services site is not the source of pesticides in the surface water of Wine Creek and is not presently a source of PCB contamination in the sediments in the adjacent wetlands and Wine and White Creeks (although it was a likely source of PCB contamination before the construction of the containment facility in 1986). The Phase II Supplemental Pre-Remedial Design Study also identified two additional potential sources of PCBs in the sediments in the wetlands and creeks in the vicinity of the Pollution Abatement Services site. The findings of the Phase I and II Supplemental Pre-Remedial Design Studies were documented in a September 1996 Explanation of Significant Differences.

Since residual PCBs from the Pollution Abatement Services site may remain in the sediments in the vicinity of the site and, therefore, may act as a continuing source of contamination, a focused feasibility study was completed in August 1997. The purpose of this study was to identify and evaluate remedial alternatives to address the PCB-contaminated sediments. A ROD addressing the PCB-contaminated sediments was signed on September 30, 1997. The selected remedy requires no further remedial action; however, it does require long-term monitoring of the PCB-contaminated sediments at the site. Since no further physical construction is necessary at this site, the site qualified for inclusion on the Construction Completion List with the signing of the ROD in September 1997.

Five-year reviews are undertaken at sites to ensure that implemented remedies protect public health and the environment and that they function as intended by site decision documents. In June 1998 and December 2003, EPA issued Five-Year Review Reports, which concluded that the remedies at the site were implemented in accordance with the remedies selected in the RODs and that the remedies set forth in the RODs are fully protective of human health and the environment. The third Five-Year Review for the Site will be completed by December 2008.

Site Facts: In 1990, the PRPs signed an AOC with EPA to undertake an investigation into the nature and extent of the contamination located outside the slurry wall surrounding the site. In July 1994, the PRPs executed an AOC with EPA to perform the Supplemental Pre-Remedial Design Study. Following negotiations with the PRPs related to the continued performance of the operation and maintenance related to the containment remedy, a Consent Decree was executed with EPA. The Consent Decree was entered in U.S. District Court (approved by the Judge) on August 10, 1998. In September 1998, EPA entered into a Consent Decree with the PRPs to undertake the PCB-monitoring activities called for in the 1997 ROD. The Consent Decree was entered in U.S. District Court on February 25, 1999. The work called for in both Consent Decrees is currently underway.

Cleanup Progress

The immediate and long-term cleanup actions undertaken at the site have greatly reduced the threat to public health and the environment. These efforts include the treatment and discharge of more than one million gallons of contaminated water that were contained in on-site lagoons, the removal of more than 10,000 drums of contaminants from the site, the capping of the 15.5-acre landfill, the installation of a slurry wall, and the extraction and off-site treatment/disposal, to date, of approximately 3.2 million gallons of leachate.

Site Repositories

Oswego City Hall, West Oneida Street, Oswego, NY 13126

EPA Region 2 Superfund Records Center, 290 Broadway, 18th Floor, New York, NY 10007-1866