

# Franklin Burn Site

## New Jersey

EPA ID#: NJD986570992

### EPA REGION 2 Congressional District(s): 02

Gloucester  
Franklin Twp

#### NPL LISTING HISTORY

Proposed Date: 10/2/1995

Final Date: 6/17/1996

Deletion Date: 2/28/2009

## Site Description

The Franklin Burn Site consists of seven separate parcels of land, referred to as Subsites 1 through 7. All subsites are within an area approximately one square mile in size, located in Franklin Township, Gloucester County in the State of New Jersey. Fires were set at each site to burn away the plastic coatings from insulated wire and other electrical components for the recovery and sale of copper. The burning operations resulted in the generation of ash piles containing hazardous substances. Site burning activities are reported to have ceased in 1988 and have remained inactive since that time.

Site Responsibility: This site is being addressed through Federal actions.

## Threat and Contaminants

In general, the ash piles were found to contain high levels of metals. In addition to the metals, some ash piles also contained low levels of one or more of the following:

pesticides, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polychlorinated dibenzo-dioxins (dioxins), polychlorinated dibenzofurans (furans), and organics.

In September 1992, EPA's Environmental Response Team (ERT) conducted preliminary groundwater investigations at all seven subsites using a Geoprobe to install temporary monitoring wells adjacent to and downgradient of the burn sites. Groundwater samples were collected and sent to a laboratory for analysis. The results of the groundwater screening event in September 1992 indicated that the groundwater in the vicinity of Subsites 1, 3 and 7 might contain low concentrations of some metals.

## Cleanup Approach

This site is being addressed in two stages -- initial removal actions and a longer-termed remedial phase. Under the Superfund Accelerated Cleanup Model (SACM) paradigm, soil and ash removal activities were completed at all seven subsites by 1997.

Response Action Status -

Removal: From September 1989 to September 1990, EPA conducted extensive investigations at Subsites 1 and 2. During that period, EPA's Removal Action Branch installed chain-link fences to secure the sites and applied a soil-binding polymer to the ash to minimize the generation and migration of dust. In May 1991, EPA performed an assessment of the two subsites for their potential inclusion on the National Priorities List (NPL). During the assessment of Subsites 1 and 2, four additional burn sites, now referred to as Subsites 3, 4, 5 and 6, were discovered. In July 1992, ongoing investigations identified a seventh subsite. Removal activities were initiated in September 1992 beginning with Subsite 5, since it was located directly adjacent to an occupied residence.

EPA has taken removal actions at all subsites. Beginning in March 1993, removal activities were conducted at Subsites 1 and 2. Approximately 3,000 cubic yards of contaminated ash/soil were consolidated and stockpiled on Subsite 1. At Subsite 2, approximately 2,500 cubic yards of contaminated ash/soil were consolidated and stockpiled on-site. The consolidated ash was covered with impermeable vinyl liners to prevent rain water infiltration. These actions were necessary to minimize the migration of contaminants off-site, and to eliminate the threat of direct contact with

contaminated ash. A silt fence was installed above the stockpile area at Subsite 1 to divert surface drainage away from the contaminated soil/ash to reduce contaminant migration and soil erosion. Following the consolidation of ash, post-excavation sampling of the surrounding surficial soils was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the removal activities. The results indicated that the cleanup levels for target metals have been achieved.

In February 1993, a similar removal action was undertaken at Subsite 3. Approximately 250 cubic yards of contaminated ash/soil were stockpiled on-site. A perimeter fence was installed and warning signs were posted to restrict access to the site. The results of the post-excavation sampling of the surrounding surficial soils indicated that cleanup levels for target metals were achieved.

The temporary on-site storage of contaminated ash/soil for Subsides 1, 2 and 3 was intended to prevent further off-site migration of contamination. The removal action at these subsites did not include the off-site disposal of the ash and contaminated soil, due to the presence of dioxins and furans and/or PCBs in concentrations that may have required special consideration when selecting treatment or disposal alternatives. EPA performed additional testing of the soil/ash piles to further characterize the material and determined that off-site disposal was appropriate. In March 1997, the removal action was re-started and it then concluded in May 1997. Over 4,100 tons of RCRA hazardous waste, 2.5 tons of RCRA/TSCA waste and 485 tons of non-regulated waste were removed from the site and disposed at approved facilities.

The removal of contaminated ash/soil at Subsides 4, 5, 6 and 7 was initiated in September 1992. Approximately 3,600 cubic yards of contaminated ash/soil were excavated and transported off-site for stabilization and/or landfilling at an off-site disposal facility. The results of post-excavation soil sampling indicated that EPA cleanup levels have been met at Subsides 4 and 7. Backfilling has been completed at Subsides 4 through 7 and the excavated areas have been revegetated. At Subsides 5 and 6, it was determined that contaminants had migrated to areas below the water table. During the cleanup, it was not feasible to excavate below the water table. As a result, some low-level contamination remains at these subsites. This residual contamination was addressed in EPA's Remedial Investigation (RI) for the site.

Groundwater and Soils: As part of the remedial investigation, EPA installed groundwater monitoring wells to confirm the preliminary groundwater results from previous investigations. Since there was some slight indication of contamination at Subsides 1, 3 and 7, groundwater monitoring wells were installed. Additionally, because contaminants remain below the water table at Subsides 5 and 6, EPA installed monitoring wells to determine the extent to which these contaminants may be impacting groundwater quality. Additional monitoring wells were installed in areas where screening tests indicated volatile organic compounds in the groundwater. In December 1995, groundwater samples were obtained from 16 monitoring wells. In addition, eight residential homes in the vicinity of Subsides 2, 3, 5 and 6 were also sampled. No compounds were detected above health-based levels in the residential wells; however, dioxin was found in a monitoring well tapping the shallow groundwater beneath Subsite 7. Subsequent redevelopment and sampling of this monitoring well indicated no dioxins/furans above health-based benchmarks.

The RI also included sampling of surface water and sediments at subsites located along the Hayes Branch, a wetlands investigation, and additional sampling of the stockpiled contaminated ash and soil at Subsides 1, 2 and 3. Some compounds, such as methylene chloride, bis(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate, aluminum, iron, manganese and dioxins were detected in the first round of sampling. Additional sampling confirmed the results. Ash and soil stockpiled at Subsides 1, 2 and 3 have subsequently been removed and disposed at an off-site facility. A December 1998 re-sampling of select sediment samples in the wetland at Subsite 6 confirmed the haphazard nature of contaminant deposition. No surface water was present in the wetland areas at Subsides 1, 5 and 6 during an August 1998 visual inspection or the December 1998 sediment sampling event.

To complete the data collection for the RI, additional groundwater and soil sampling events were completed at Subsite 7 in February and July 2000. The groundwater data indicated that dioxin and furan congeners, which were a potential concern, were within acceptable limits. The soil data, which was collected to determine if copper was a concern, indicated that all values were below levels of concern with the exception of one reading which was slightly above the New Jersey ecological effects-derived soil criteria.

In September 2000, site-specific vegetation and soil sampling were conducted to determine plant uptake values for use in the human health home-grown produce pathway analysis. The data collected during this investigation indicated that risks associated with this pathway were within acceptable limits.

The Updated Risk Assessment and RI Addendum reports were submitted in March and June 2001, respectively. Some residual contamination in soil and sediment was identified during the remedial investigation process. This residual contamination is limited and does not represent a significant threat to public health or the environment; therefore, further remediation is not considered to be necessary. In August 2001, based on the data presented in these documents and other documents found in the Administrative Record for the site, EPA issued a Proposed Plan identifying No Further Action as the preferred alternative. In May 2004, after addressing comments offered by the public and the State of New Jersey and based on the response actions, studies and site-specific risk analysis, EPA issued a No Further Action Record of Decision for the site.

## **Cleanup Progress**

Response actions completed at the site prior to the completion of the remedial investigation included the excavation and off-site disposal of 10,063 tons of debris, ash and contaminated soil. Source control actions, consolidation and/or removal of contaminated soils and fencing, reduced or eliminated the potential for exposure to contaminated soils while the Remedial Investigation was being conducted. Based on the completed response actions, studies and site-specific risk assessment, EPA determined that residual contamination levels do not pose an unacceptable risk and, therefore, no further cleanup is required.

## **Site Repositories**

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Site Management, 6th floor 401 East State Street  
Trenton, N.J. 08625

Franklin Township Public Library, 1549 Delsea Drive Franklinville, New Jersey 08322