

Former Elf Atochem North America - Cornwells Heights Plant/Bensalem Redevelopment

2375 State Road
Bensalem, PA 19020
Congressional District 8
EPA ID #: PAD002290823
Site Property Area: 25 Acres
Last Updated: 11/06/2009

Current Progress at the Site

Elf Atochem completed a preliminary evaluation of the soil and groundwater contamination at several areas of the facility in April 1996. The current site owner, Bensalem Redevelopment LP (BRLP), completed a site-wide characterization in February 2004. A second round of facility-wide groundwater sampling was conducted in May 2004. A Remedial Investigation/Risk Assessment Report that summarized the above fieldwork (with the exception of the second round of groundwater sampling) was submitted to EPA in May 2004. Based on the RI/RA Report, additional soil and groundwater samples were collected in September/October 2004 to further characterize site conditions. A Final Characterization Report was submitted to EPA in late November 2004. The site characterizations indicated that some of the site soils and groundwater have been impacted by contaminants including chlorinated organics, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), pesticides and arsenic. Based on the analytical results of the site characterizations, BRLP submitted a Remedial Action Workplan (RAWP) to EPA in October 2005. The plan called for the removal of soils containing contaminants at concentrations above the PADEP Act II cleanup levels. EPA provided comments on the RAWP to BRLP in December 2005. After several rounds of discussions, EPA approved of the RAWP on May 16, 2006.

Site remediation activities began in the fall of 2006 with the demolition of Bldg. Nos. B-1, B-2/3 and B-5. The remaining on-site building, Bldg. No. B-4 was subsequently demolished in August 2007. Two hundred fifty thousand (250,000) tons of crushed concrete from the demolished buildings was reused as fill material in the former basements of the razed buildings and at other locations on the site. Remedial action has been completed at all of the identified areas of concern (AOCs), including two AOCs found during the cleanup. The two new AOCs are an area of soil contamination found underneath Bldg. B-2's concrete pad and two former No. 6 fuel oil underground storage tanks located along the southern corner of Bldg. B-3. The remedial action included the removal of approximately 43,700 tons of contaminated soils. The draft Final Remediation Report was submitted to EPA/PADEP in September 2007 and after several rounds of comments, EPA approved the report on September 12, 2008.

A Final Decision was also issued on September 12, 2008, which calls for the continued monitoring of groundwater and soil gas beneath the Facility along with the implementation of institutional controls as specified in Environmental Covenant pursuant to the Pennsylvania Uniform Environmental Covenants Act. The Environmental Covenant includes the installation of a vapor barrier beneath all new on-site structures to prevent the migration of organic vapors from groundwater into indoor air space and Facility-wide restriction of groundwater usage for any purpose. The vapor barrier design was approved on October 2, 2009.

Based on the available historical site information, the former Elf Atochem facility achieved a "Yes" determination for the Current Human Exposures Under Control Environmental Indicator (EI) in August 2004. A "Yes" determination for the Groundwater Under Control EI was issued in January 2008.

Site Description

The Facility is located on State Road in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Although the Facility is now inactive, it was the site of several manufacturing operations beginning with a shipbuilding company in 1917. In the 1940s, the site was owned by the U.S. Government and was used for sulfuric acid, hydrogen fluoride and cryolite production, as well as aluminum refining. From the 1950s through the 1990s, site operations included the blending of chemicals for cleaning and lubricating agents for the laundry and metal working industries, and the repackaging of bulk materials such as refrigerants and hydrochloric acid. In 1997, all manufacturing operations were terminated, equipment was removed from the property and the buildings were decommissioned.

In May 2005, EPA awarded a \$250,000 Brownfields Grant to the Bucks County Redevelopment Authority (BCRA) to assist in the cleanup of this property. BCRA was also awarded a \$1 million Brownfield loan in August 2005 from EPA to remediate the site. Bensalem Redevelopment, LP (BRLP), the current site owner, plans to redevelop the site as a mixed-use area, including residential space, commercial space, and greenspace.

Site Responsibility

RCRA Corrective Action activities at this facility are being conducted under the direction of EPA Region 3 with assistance from the State. Bensalem Redevelopment LP is seeking a release from liability under PADEP's Land Recycling (Act II) Program.

Contaminants

Site soils historically have been found to contain PAHs, PCBs, pesticides and arsenic at concentrations above both EPA risk based concentrations (RBCs) and PADEP Act II medium specific concentrations (MSCs). All soils containing concentrations of contaminants above the MSCs have been removed from the site. The groundwater at the site contains elevated levels of a few chlorinated organic chemicals and a few metals. The groundwater is not used as a drinking water source. Groundwater does discharge into the Delaware River; however, extensive modeling has shown the discharge does not negatively impact that water body.

Community Interaction

Bensalem Redevelopment, LP borders the Delaware River and is located in an industrial/commercial area. The facility is situated within an area designated as a State Enterprise Zone. Designated enterprise zones are given priority consideration to facilitate identified business investment and job creation opportunities. The Bucks County Redevelopment Authority (BCRA) has received a site assessment grant from Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development to conduct the investigation described above. Bensalem Township along with BCRA also applied for EPA's Brownfield Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup Grants for site remediation.

Institutional Controls

The Environmental Covenant includes the installation of a vapor barrier beneath all new on-site structures to prevent the migration of organic vapors from groundwater into indoor air space and

Facility-wide restriction of groundwater usage for any purpose. The document may be viewed in its entirety by clicking on the following link:

http://www.ahs.dep.state.pa.us/LandRecycling_Brownfields/PDF/WatersideBens_090109.pdf

Government Contact

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For more information about EPA's corrective action webpage, including Environmental Indicators, please visit our site at: www.epa.gov/reg3wcmd/correctiveaction.htm

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