

# Witco Chemical Corp. (Oakland Plant)

## New Jersey

EPA ID#: NJD045653854

### EPA REGION 2

Congressional District(s): 05

Bergen  
Oakland

#### NPL LISTING HISTORY

Proposed Date: 6/24/1988

Final Date: 10/4/1989

Deletion Date: 11/18/1993

## Site Description

The Witco Chemical Corp. (Oakland Plant) operates a technical research facility for the development of specialty chemicals at this 9-acre site on Bauer Drive in Oakland. From 1966 through 1984, the company neutralized laboratory wastewater in an underground tank and then discharged it into a network of six unlined subsurface seepage pits. This network lies in an aquifer used for domestic and industrial purposes. The New Jersey State Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) inspected the operation in 1982. Petroleum hydrocarbons and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) were detected in soil and groundwater samples. The operation is located in an industrial park. It is bordered by Hopper Lake, a recreational water body, and a housing development. Approximately 43,000 people live within a 3-mile radius of the site, and 5,000 live within 1 mile. The entire population draws its drinking water supplies from either municipal or private wells that tap the aquifer of concern. A freshwater wetland lies within a mile of the site, and Franklin Lake, used for recreation, is 3 miles downstream.

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

## Threat and Contaminants

Groundwater contained petroleum hydrocarbons, the VOCs toluene and ethyl benzene, and carbon disulfide and phthalates. Soil was contaminated with pesticides including dieldrin, DDE, and DDT and the heavy metals mercury, cadmium, and lead. The seepage pit samples revealed the presence of high levels of petroleum hydrocarbons and other organic and inorganic contaminants.

## Cleanup Approach

The site has been addressed in two stages: initial actions and a long-term remedial phase, focusing on cleanup of the entire site.

#### Response Action Status

Immediate Actions: Under a 1982 directive from the NJDEP, Witco began cleanup operations. The company installed a 6,000-gallon fiberglass tank to receive laboratory waste. This completely eliminated any subsurface discharges by early 1984. A separate system for discharging uncontaminated cooling waters into a nearby lake has been established under a State environmental permit. In 1987, Witco started its own independent soil cleanup. Workers removed remaining sludge, contaminated soil, and various seepage pit components. They backfilled and closed the excavation by 1988. The soils removed were those contaminated to a level of 100 parts per million of petroleum hydrocarbons.

Entire Site: To ensure that Witco's cleanup met safety standards, EPA ordered the company to conduct groundwater and soil investigations to determine the nature and extent of any remaining contamination present onsite. Witco completed the investigation in mid-1992. Based on the results of the investigations, EPA determined that no further cleanup actions were needed at the site.

Site Facts: Pursuant to a July 1982 State directive, Witco deactivated its seepage pit system and performed a hydrogeologic investigation. In August 1989, Witco entered into an Administrative Order with the EPA for the performance of an investigation of the site. A "No Further Action" Record of Decision was signed in September 1992. A Notice of Intent to Delete was published in the Federal Register on November 18, 1993. EPA deleted the Witco Site from the National Priorities List on September 29, 1995.

## **Cleanup Progress**

Witco removed and landfilled offsite approximately 720 cubic yards (1152 tons) of contaminated soils and seepage pit components, and 14 drums of sludge. These actions have eliminated the threat of exposure to contamination at the Witco Chemical Corp. (Oakland Plant) site. The EPA has determined that no further cleanup actions are needed at the site.

## **Site Repositories**

USEPA Records Center 290 Broadway, 18th floor New York, NY 10007 (212) 637-4308