

Hooker Chemical/Ruco Polymer

New York

EPA ID#: NYD002920312

EPA REGION 2

Congressional District(s): 03

Nassau

Hicksville

NPL LISTING HISTORY

Proposed Date: 10/1/1984

Final Date: 6/1/1986

Site Description

The Hooker Chemical/Ruco Polymer site, located in an industrial park area of Hicksville on Long Island, has been used to manufacture plastics, latex, and esters since 1945. Liquid process wastes were discharged into sand sumps from 1951 to 1975. The sand sumps for Plant 2 manufactured polyvinyl chloride (PVCs) and latex, received approximately 2 million gallons of process wastewater per year from 1956 to 1975. Reportedly, the dry well for Plant 1, used for the manufacture of esters also received wastewater. Some glycol wastes have been incinerated on site. Numerous leaks and spills of chemicals, including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), had occurred. Waste disposal and chemical spillage also have occurred at the adjacent Grumman Aerospace Corporation Plant that is being addressed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the U.S. Navy. Currently, all buildings located at the site have been demolished and the entire site has been razed to ground level. The 14-acre Ruco Polymer plant site is fenced. Approximately 20,000 people live within a mile of the site. There are four public water supply wells within a mile of the site and 24 wells within 3 miles.

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

Threat and Contaminants

Groundwater underlying the site is contaminated with organic compounds such as vinyl chloride, trichloroethylene (TCE) perchloroethylene (PCE) and tentatively identified compounds (TICs). Several industrial wells located downgradient from the site are also contaminated with vinyl chloride.

On-site soils contained volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs). All the homes in the area are connected to the public water supply. There is a potential health risk is to people who eat, drink, inhale, or come into direct contact with contaminants if they were to use untreated groundwater for domestic service.

Cleanup Approach

EPA has designated three operable units for the Site. Operable Unit 1 (OU-1) addresses contaminated soils at the Hooker/Ruco Facility. Operable Unit 2 (OU-2) addresses polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) contaminated surface soils. Operable Unit 3 (OU-3), addresses the downgradient commingled contaminated groundwater plume beyond the Hooker/Ruco Facility and also the contaminated groundwater beneath the Hooker/Ruco Facility.

Response Action Status

PCB-Contaminated Soils: Based on a potentially responsible party's (PRP's) study to address the PCB-contaminated soils, in 1990 EPA issued a Record of Decision (ROD) for OU-2 to excavate and remove all PCB-contaminated soils. This action was conducted by the potentially responsible parties under an Administrative Order issued by EPA and was completed in 1992.

Ruco Facility: In 1988, the EPA signed a Consent Order with the PRPs to conduct a study to determine the nature and extent of site contamination and to evaluate alternatives for final cleanup. In January 1994, based on the results of this study, EPA issued a Record of Decision for OU-1 for the Ruco facility which includes additional soil sampling, excavation of shallow soils in limited areas, soil flushing and control of contaminated groundwater beneath the Ruco facility. In June 1994, EPA issued a Unilateral Administrative Order directing the PRPs to perform the Remedial Design and Remedial Action (RD/RA). Actions on this site are being coordinated with the actions taken on the adjoining Northrop/Grumman (Northrop) and Naval Weapons Industrial Weapons Reserve Plant (NWIRP) sites. The groundwater beneath the

Hooker/Ruco Site is commingled with the downgradient contaminated groundwater beneath the Northrop and NWIRP sites. The remedial actions performed for the unsaturated soil component of OU-1 consisted of: the excavation and off-site disposal of 310 tons of PCB contaminated soil; removal and off-site disposal of the concrete tank in Sump 1 and the installation of a soil flushing system on sump one to enhance the migration of the remaining minimal chemical presence from the unsaturated soils to the groundwater. Water flushing injections occurred in Sump 1 in August 2002, March 2003 and February 2004. The final soil flushing injection was performed in March 2005. The groundwater will be addressed in turn by the OU-3 remedy as noted below.

Downgradient Groundwater: In September 2000 based on the RI/FS, EPA issued an OU-3 ROD for the site that includes the remediation of a distinct plume of groundwater contaminated with vinyl chloride, the primary contaminant at the site, using an innovative treatment system called "biosparging". Biosparging is a form of bioremediation that involves the introduction of air/oxygen into the aquifer to enhance the natural breakdown of the vinyl chloride in the groundwater. This treatment system will operate in addition to the groundwater treatment systems that are already operating under NYSDEC authority to effectively remove a mix of VOCs emanating from the sites. In April 2001, EPA issued an Administrative Order directing the PRPs for the Hooker Chemical/Ruco Polymer Site to perform the Remedial Design and Remedial Action for the September 2000 ROD. In May 2001, the PRPs for the Hooker Ruco Site responded with their intent to comply with the terms of the Administrative Order. Pre-design investigative field activities in support of the selected remedy (i.e., biosparging) were completed in August 2002. The 35% and 95% Remedial Design documents were approved and the finalization and approval of the 100% Remedial Design document was completed in August 2005. Remedial action construction activities related to the implementation of Phase I of the biosparging remedy began in September 2005 and were completed in October 2006 with an O&M period running to October 2007. Construction activities related to Phase II will begin in the Spring of 2008. Phase III, which is the final Phase, is expected to begin in January 2009.

Cleanup Progress

After listing the Hooker Chemical/Ruco site on the NPL, the EPA determined that no immediate actions were required to reduce threats to the public or the environment. An early action, taken to address the PCB contaminated soil, has eliminated the potential for exposure. 3,230 tons (1,957 yd³) of soils with PCB concentrations from 10-500 parts per million (parts) were sent to an off-site landfill. 85.2 tons (52 yd³) of soils with PCB concentrations greater than 500 ppm were sent to an off-site incinerator.

Site Repositories

Hicksville Public Library, 169 Jerusalem Avenue, Hicksville, NY 11801