

Site Fact Sheet
Little Elk Creek
Area-Wide One Cleanup Program Pilot Project
RMR, JMR Corporation Property

655 North Bridge Street
Elkton, MD 21921

Property Description

The 5.1-acre RMR, JMR Corporation property is located in a mixed-use area in the town of Elkton. Improvements include a single story building (107,000 square feet) that manufactured fractional (< 1) horsepower electric motors. The property and vicinity receive public water and sanitary sewer services from the town of Elkton.

An underutilized industrial park located along the Little Elk Creek in Cecil County, Maryland has been selected as an Area-Wide Pilot Project under U.S. EPA's One Cleanup Program and Land Revitalization initiatives. The goals of the Little Elk Creek Pilot Project is to address a widespread groundwater contamination problem stemming from multiple industrial sources within a geographic area and support development and reuse needs of the surrounding community.

The nearest surface water bodies to the site are Dogwood Run located 2,000 ft. to the northeast, Little Elk Creek located 2,800 ft. to the west-southwest, and Big Elk Creek located 2,800 ft. to the east. The Little Elk Creek and Big Elk Creek join about 8,000 ft. to the south and enter the Elk River, located two miles south of the property.

Property History

The property was used for agricultural purposes prior to 1938. The single story building was constructed in 1938 and expanded in 1957. Between 1964 and 1969 property owners included the Cecil Whig Publishing Company and the Milwill Realty Corporation. The current property owners, RMR, JMR Corporation, purchased the property from the Milwill Realty Corporation in 1969 and began operations.

Between 1969 and 1989, the manufacturing facility produced fractional horsepower electrical motors. During this period, permits were retained for wastewater discharge, and controlled hazardous substances. The RMR, JMR Corporation is listed in Maryland Department of the Environment's (MDE) records as a large quantity generator of controlled hazardous waste from 1982 to 1989. Manufacturing operations at the facility generated waste oil, corrosives (sodium hydroxide, black oxide, ammonia), Xylol, degreaser fluid (1,1,1, trichloroethane), methylene chloride, waste paint, methanol, transformer oil containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), caustics (paint stripper, shaft cleaner, varnish stripper), degreaser still bottoms, and naphtha. In 1989, the RMR, JMR Corporation declared bankruptcy and boarded up the property.

Environmental Investigations

On July 27, 1994, a tornado struck the building and the damage prompted an inspection by the MDE's Emergency Response Division. Approximately 30 transformers, 130 drums and several above-ground storage tanks were in the vicinity of the building. The MDE requested and received assistance from the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region III to perform a removal action in late-1994 to early-1995. The action involved combining similar waste streams, triple-rinsing PCB transformers with kerosene, cleaning and disposing of the AST contents, industrial cleaning of a concrete floor, and the removal of five 55-gallon drums of lead-impacted soil. Upon completion, the building and surrounding property were secured.

In 1994, the Waste Management Administration conducted a preliminary assessment of the property. Post-confirmatory sampling in areas of concern revealed low levels of PCBs and metals. Based on a toxicological evaluation, the Department concluded that the residual contamination did not pose a threat to human health and the environment. The property was designated by the U. S. EPA as "No Further Remedial Action Planned."

Contaminants

VOCs have been found in the groundwater in the area. Low levels of PCBs and metals have been found in onsite soils.

Cleanup and Next Steps

On August 21, 2001, the Voluntary Cleanup/Brownfields Division received an application from Schwab LLC seeking a Certificate of Completion Determination as an inculpable person. The intended future use of the property is for a warehouse facility. Following a review of the application, the Department requested soil vapor sampling and groundwater modeling. The Department received the supplemental information and the results of the soil vapor sampling and groundwater modeling were acceptable. In April 2004, the Department completed a groundwater quality survey in the Elkton area to verify whether any sensitive receptors are being impacted due to regional groundwater contamination from multiple sources.

In December 2005, the applicant performed a supplemental groundwater investigation on the property, and the Department is currently awaiting the submittal of the groundwater sampling data.

Lead Agency and Contacts

MDE is the lead agency for this site and continues to investigate it as part of the overall groundwater contamination investigation in the Elkton area.

EPA Contact

Ms. Lorie Baker - 3HS12
US Environmental Protection Agency - Region III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-2029
Phone: (215) 814-3355
Email: baker.lorie@epa.gov

State Contact

Mr. Jim Metz, Chief
Voluntary Cleanup/Brownfields Division
Maryland Department of the Environment
1800 Washington Blvd., Suite 645
Baltimore, MD 21230-1719
Phone: (410) 537-3400
Email: jmetz@mde.state.md.us