

# Martin Aaron, Inc.

## New Jersey

EPA ID#: NJD014623854

### EPA REGION 2 Congressional District(s): 01

Camden  
City of Camden

NPL LISTING HISTORY  
Proposed Date: 4/23/1999  
Final Date: 8/23/1999

## Site Description

The 2.5-acre Martin Aaron, Inc. site is located at 1542 South Broadway in a mixed residential and industrial section of Camden, New Jersey. Various companies, including Martin Aaron, Inc., used the site for drum recycling for approximately 30 years, ending in 1998. The above-ground portions of the former Martin Aaron building were demolished by the City of Camden in 1998. One large former process building remains on the property. Several of the businesses also used a nearby facility, 1535 South Broadway, for storage and handling of drums, and this property is also an area of concern.

Various steel drum reconditioning operations were performed on the property. "Empty" drums were turned upside down and allowed to drain into tanks, after which the drums were pressure-washed, steam-rinsed and dried, sand-blasted, inspected for integrity, and repainted. The residues from drum contents, rinsate, and steam blow-down were drained from tanks and floor drains into skimming basins. Sludge was skimmed from the basins for off-site disposal, and the acidic water was neutralized and reused in the plant. The process also generated baghouse dust (from sand-blasting) and spray paint wastes.

Numerous violations of environmental statutes were issued by EPA and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to operators at the property, the earliest dating from 1971, primarily related to illegal discharges and inappropriate storage of drums. Anonymous reports indicated that drums and other containerized waste were buried on the property. The skimming basins were allegedly designed to discharge excess wastewater, after pH adjustment, to the combined sanitary/storm sewer system; however, it is suspected that some of the effluent discharged directly to the subsurface. Numerous above-ground and underground storage tanks were associated with the operations, and the majority of the vacant land has been used for drum storage.

The properties are fenced to limit trespassing. Residents in the area use a municipal water supply; the nearest Camden City well is approximately 1.75 miles east of the site.

Site Responsibility: The site is being addressed through Federal and state actions.

## Threat and Contaminants

Prior to several removal actions, drums, above-ground and underground storage tanks and other process vessels had been abandoned at the site. NJDEP testing of surface and subsurface soils has identified extensive contamination, including volatile organic compounds (VOCs), metals (e.g., arsenic, cadmium, mercury, lead), along with a wide range of other constituents. Monitoring wells installed on the property indicate that ground water is primarily contaminated with VOCs and metals.

## Cleanup Approach

The site is being addressed in two stages: immediate actions and a long-term remedial phase focusing on the entire site.

### Response Action Status

Immediate Actions: In 1987, NJDEP ordered Martin Aaron, Inc. to remove contaminated soil and drums excavated from a test pit. Approximately 30 overpacked drums and 15 intact drums were removed for off-site disposal. Further efforts to have the responsible parties perform investigations and cleanup were unsuccessful, and collaborative EPA/NJDEP removal actions were initiated in 1999. These actions have removed abandoned process equipment and drums,

above-ground and under-ground storage tanks, and contaminated surface soils.

Entire Site: In May 1997, NJDEP initiated a remedial investigation and feasibility study (RI/FS) to determine the nature and extent of contamination throughout the site, and the risks posed by the site. NJDEP has completed an investigation of the on-site contamination, identifying an area of soil contamination associated with the former process areas, and groundwater contamination. When the site was placed on National Priorities List in 1999, NJDEP requested that EPA take the lead in completing the investigations of off-site contamination and evaluating remedies for the site.

EPA formally completed the RI/FS in July of 2005 of the site and off-site properties. A Record of Decision for both soils and groundwater on and off-site was approved on September 30, 2005. EPA's cleanup plan includes excavating contaminated soil, treating the soil if necessary, and disposing of the excavated soil off of the site. Residual soil contamination will be capped, and future uses of the site will be restricted. Groundwater will be addressed by extracting it from the ground, treating it and then discharging the treated ground water into the sewer system.

## **Cleanup Progress**

By removing drums, process equipment, tanks and soil from the site, and maintaining fencing of the remaining subsurface soil contamination, EPA and the State have stabilized the site until the appropriate site studies are completed.

EPA has recently reached an agreement with the responsible parties to undertake the soil cleanup. The responsible parties have initiated the design of the soil remedy. EPA expects preliminary field work to begin in Summer 2008.

## **Site Repositories**

There are two designated Site Repositories located at: U.S. EPA Region 2 Records Center, 290 Broadway, 18th Floor New York, New York 10007-1866; and Camden Free Public Library 418 Federal Street Camden, NJ 08103