

U.S. EPA FACT SHEET:

ANNISTON SITE

ANNISTON, CALHOUN COUNTY, ALABAMA

February 13, 2001

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Anniston Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB) Site consists of residential and commercial properties located in and around Anniston, Calhoun County, Alabama. This Site is being investigated for PCB's and other contaminants by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Previous site investigations by the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), and EPA Region 4 have determined that the PCB contamination is evident in the Anniston area.

The Solutia facility in Anniston, Alabama, is one of two facilities in the United States to have produced PCBs (aroclor). The Solutia Anniston plant occupies 70 acres of land, about 1 mile west of downtown, Anniston, Alabama.

The facility is regulated under the Alabama Hazardous Waste Management and Minimization Act (e.g., ADEM has been authorized to implement the Resource Conservation Act (RCRA) in lieu of the federal RCRA program). Through investigations initiated under the RCRA program, it has been determined that the Solutia facility, the adjacent community, and the drainage ditches exiting the property as well as the downstream waterways (Snow Creek, Choccolocco Creek, and the Coosa River-Lake Logan Martin) are contaminated with PCBs.

Solutia has conducted investigations of the facility and adjacent community to determine storm water runoff and air contamination and has instituted interim measures toward eliminating further releases and minimizing human exposure. The facility is currently investigating the downstream waterways to assess the human health and environmental impacts in these areas.

On December 31, 1998, EPA Administrator Carol Browner received a letter from the West Anniston Environmental Justice Task Force, now known as Citizens Against Pollution (CAP), asking for EPA action in regard to PCB contamination in Anniston, Alabama. Since then, the EPA Region 4 office has been working with CAP. One of the main consequences of regional contact with CAP has been the transmittal of information and data that PCB soil contamination exists in areas not previously defined under ADEM RCRA program. CAP also provided information that air releases of PCBs might be occurring at levels of concern at the closed and covered landfills. Information provided by CAP and obtained from Solutia via a RCRA 3007 Order also informed EPA that blood PCB concentrations were elevated in residents from a broad area surrounding Solutia. This information provided to EPA was collected as part of a class action lawsuit against Solutia (e.g., the "Plaintiff's Data" or the "Community Data").

II. *SITE DESCRIPTION*

The Solutia's Anniston plant encompasses 70 acres of land and is located about 1 mile west of downtown Anniston, Alabama. The site is bounded to the north by the Norfolk Southern and Erie railroads, east and west by residential properties, and south by U.S. Highway 202.

In 1917, the Southern Manganese Corporation (SMC) opened the plant, which began producing ferro-manganese, ferro-silicon, ferro-phosphorous compounds, and phosphoric acid. In the late 1920's the plant also started producing biphenyls. SMC became Swann Chemical Company (SCC) in 1930, and in 1935, SCC was purchased by Monsanto. In 1935, Monsanto began the production of PCBs, parathion, phosphorous pentasulfide, para-nitrophenol, and polyphenyl. Monsanto ceased the production of PCBs in the early 1970s. EPA banned PCB production in 1979. In the mid-1980s, Monsanto ceased the production of parathion and phosphorous pentasulfide. Monsanto renamed its chemical division Solutia in 1997 and currently produces para-nitrophenol and polyphenyl compounds at its Anniston plant.

During the operational history, the plant disposed of hazardous and nonhazardous waste at two landfills, the west end landfill (WEL) and south end landfill (SEL), which are located adjacent to the plant. The WEL encompasses 6 acres of land and is located on the southwestern side of the plant. The WEL is unlined and was used for disposal of the plant's wastes from the mid-1930s until 1961. In 1961, the WEL was purchased by the Alabama Power Company, and Monsanto began disposing of wastes at the SEL. The SEL is located southeast of the plant across U.S. Highway 202 and is situated on the lower northeastern slope of Coldwater Mountain. The SEL consists of 10 individual, unlined cells, of which two cells were used for the disposal of hazardous wastes from the plant. Disposal of wastes at the SEL ceased in 1988. In 1993, Alabama Power Company resold the WEL to Monsanto and leased a small parcel of land to the north of the WEL for its utility station and lines.

Previous site investigations by the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 4 have determined that the PCB contamination is attributable to the operations at the former Monsanto plant, currently known as Solutia, Incorporated.

III. RESPONSE INFORMATION

On February 2, 2000, the EPA Superfund Removal program opened a community relations center (CRC) located in downtown Anniston, Alabama. The CRC serves the community as an information center, distributing brochures and fact sheets, answering over 2,755 calls, and providing services to over 631 visitors to the CRC as of August 4, 2000. The CRC has been very involved in coordinating the Site Access Agreement process with hundreds of property owners and tenants. The CRC has been staffed by an EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, EPA Environmental Justice Coordinator, EPA contractors, and representatives from ATSDR and ADEM. Numerous newspaper and television stories have been coordinated with the CRC. The EPA staff is also working very closely with two community groups, Community Against Pollution (CAP) and Sweet Valley/Cobbtown Environmental Justice (SVCEJ) Task Force to ensure meaningful community involvement in EPA's activities at the site.

The EPA Region 4 Emergency Response and Removal Branch (ERRB) is performing a removal assessment of the "remote" soil contamination at the Anniston site. In January 2000, EPA ERRB assigned an on-scene coordinator (OSC) and EPA Region 4 assigned a community relations specialist to Anniston. In addition, EPA Region 4 Science and Ecosystem Support Division (SESD) and the EPA Superfund Technical Assistance Response Team (START) contractor were tasked by the OSC to conduct sampling. Sampling areas have included residential, commercial/industrial, public areas (e.g., parks, schools) and drainage areas. A summary of the environmental sampling as of this time is as follows:

- Phase I - residential and public areas soil sampling event, February 7-8, 2000 (144 locations)
- Phase II - industrial/commercial sampling, March 20-31, 2000 (22 locations)
- Phase III - residential soil and public areas sampling, April 17-May 10, 2000 (337 locations)
- Phase IV - air monitoring and residential sampling, began June 12-30, 2000 (73 locations)
- Phase V - residential and public areas soil sampling, July 24-August 4, 2000 (318 locations)

During the 5 phases, over 2500 samples have been collected for over 800 locations. The samples that were collected were analyzed by field screening or fixed laboratory analysis. Elevated levels of PCBs, lead, and other hazardous substances have been found in the samples.

- Phase VI - residential soil sampling, September 18-20, 2000 (21 locations)
- Phase VII - residential soil sampling, December 18 -19, 2000 (10 locations)

The site assessment is expected to continue through Spring, 2001.

EPA will also host Data Availability Sessions for the residents that receive results. The sessions will provide information to residents (owners and tenants) such as an interpretation of results, recommendations and follow-up activities. Officials from EPA, ATSDR, the ADPH, ADEM, and the Calhoun County Health Department will be participating at the sessions.

The removal site assessment is being conducted in accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, Liability Act (CERCLA, also known as Superfund) and the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA). These federal laws authorize EPA to respond to actual or threatened releases of hazardous substance that may endanger public health, welfare or environment.

IV. CONTACT INFORMATION

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