



Himco Dump Update: Water Hookups in Next Cleanup Phase

Himco Dump Site
Elkhart, Indiana

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For more information

If you have questions or comments about the Himco Dump site, you can contact these EPA representatives:

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Next steps

EPA has entered into an agreement, called a Consent Decree, with the companies considered legally responsible for the pollution and cleanup at Himco Dump.

Before the next round of cleanup begins, the Consent Decree must be lodged in federal court by the U.S. Department of Justice. Once this is done there will be a 30-day public comment period and finally, a formal request will be made to the court to enter the decree. EPA anticipates the process will be completed this year.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has completed plans to connect 38 homes located on the east side of the Himco Dump site to Elkhart's municipal water system. Another seven or eight homes on the south side of the dump that are already connected will have their private wells removed. The water hookups and well removals are part of the next phase of cleanup planned in and around the hazardous waste site. Cleanup work will also include the removal of construction debris in the dump and improvements to the cap covering the Himco property to prepare it for future re-use. These projects can begin once an agreement with the parties considered responsible for the pollution is completed, which may happen later this year.

In addition to the planned improvements to the landfill cap, monitoring wells will be installed to ensure that the ground water (underground water supplies) that might move from underneath the dump site to residential areas is not polluted. Additional monitoring wells will be installed in an area where residents are not connected to city water as a precaution to protect their drinking water. A landfill gas capture system with monitoring equipment will be placed in the area to ensure landfill vapors do not drift to residential properties.

Background

Himco Dump is a closed landfill covering about 60 acres in Elkhart at County Road 10 and the Nappanee Street Extension. The dump was privately owned and operated by Himco Waste-Away Services Inc. between 1960 and 1976. The area was initially a mixture of marsh and grassland with no natural barriers that could block the release of contaminated ground water or gas. An estimated two-thirds of the waste in the landfill is calcium sulfate from Miles Laboratories, (now Bayer Healthcare, LLC). As many as 360 tons per day were dumped over an unknown period. Other waste accepted included household and commercial refuse, construction and demolition debris, and industrial and medical waste. In 1976, the landfill was closed and covered with 1 foot of sand over a layer of calcium sulfate. The area bordering the southern perimeter of the landfill consists of construction rubble.


In 1993 EPA decided on a cleanup plan for the Himco site. The planned actions included building a non-permeable landfill cap to prevent rain and snowmelt from seeping through the waste and polluting underground water supplies. Legal controls were also placed on the property to restrict land- and ground-water use. In addition EPA decided to install a gas collection and treatment system to limit and treat any vapor releases from the landfill. A ground-water monitoring system was built as well to measure the effectiveness of the cleanup actions and evaluate the need for future ground-water treatment.

In 2003 changes were made to update the cleanup plan that included modifications to the landfill cover and the establishment of a monitoring well network for the residential areas. As part of the 2003 changes, EPA also plans to remove soil from the construction debris area and monitor landfill gas. These changes will be implemented after the agreement with the responsible parties is lodged and entered in federal court.

Next Round of Himco Dump Cleanup Includes Plans for Residential Water Hookups

Work Will Start after Final Agreement
With Responsible Parties

(details inside)

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HIMCO DUMP: Plans Progressing on Water Hookups

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