

Union Switch & Signal Division

**1789 Braddock Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15218
Congressional District 18
EPA ID #: PAD000001115
Site Property Area: 40 acres
Last Updated: 05/05/2010**

Status

An Environmental Indicator Report was received in January 2009. EPA has reviewed the information and is in the process of determining if corrective action activities are necessary to ensure protection of human health and the environment.

Facility Description

The Union Switch & Signal Division (USSD) facility was situated on a triangular, 40-acre property in the Boroughs of Swissvale and Edgewood in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. The USSD site is bordered to the north by the Penn-Lincoln Highway (I-376), by Braddock Avenue to the southwest and by Conrail railroad tracks to the southeast. Beyond the railroad tracks are Edgewood Avenue and the Green Belt. Land use in the surrounding area appears to be mainly retail and residential as indicated by the topographic map. The site is located in a populated, residential area, approximately one mile north of the Monongahela River. The operating facilities were located on a plateau along the western portion of the property. The area that was used for employee parking was located in the western portion of the site approximately 60 feet below the facility. The former USSD facility was located where the Towne Centre Office Building and Edgewood Towne Centre shopping complex now stand.

From 1880 until 1987, the Site was the location of operations for USSD. USSD is a major producer of various electrical and mechanical components used in railroad signaling and control systems. Operations at the facility included the heat treatment of metal parts (for stress relief and case hardening) and painting of finished products in four spray paint booths. Also several types of electroplating processes were practiced, utilizing different plating baths, depending on the type of material required. A water-treatment plant was used by USSD for the treatment of rinse waters and a portion of the special bath material generated during plating operations.

The 40 acre property was formed through the purchase of several private properties. Operating as an independent company until 1917, USSD became a subsidiary of Westinghouse Air Brake. In 1968, American Standard purchased the entire operation and reorganized USSD as a separate division. According to information presented in the PAR, the triangular-shaped site consisted of 13 buildings including a metal plating facility, a water treatment facility and a spray booth building. A hazardous waste storage pad was located west of Building #56.

On October 15, 1985, a final Closure Plan was submitted by USSD to PADER. Public notice of the plan with the request of public comment was issued on December 10, 1985. Building demolition and site cleanup occurred in 1987 following the approval of the Closure Plan. Following the closure of the USSD operations, the property was purchased by Parkway Union Development Corporation (PUDC) in January 1988 and the site was redeveloped. The PAR states that “on December 31 1987, the USSD facility was officially closed and ownership was transferred to the Oxford Development Company (ODC)”. However, tax records indicate PUDC as the property owner.

Most of the USSD buildings were removed and the Edgewood Towne Centre shopping was erected. During the decommissioning of the USSD site in 1987 and the construction of the Edgewood Towne Centre in 1988, 37 underground storage tanks (USTs) were removed. Removal of these tanks occurred prior to the PADER UST program that became effective in August 1989; therefore, no UST closure documents were filed.

Government Contact

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For more information about EPA’s corrective action webpage, including Environmental Indicators, please visit our site at: www.epa.gov/reg3wcmd/correctiveaction.htm