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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Community Relations Plan

Aerovox
132
248126



SDMS DocID 248126

Aerovox, Inc. Superfund Site
740 Belleville Avenue
New Bedford, Massachusetts 02745



Table of Contents

A. OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN	Page 2
B. SITE DESCRIPTION	Page 2
C. SITE HISTORY: Inspections and Removal Actions	Page 3
1981-1993	Page 3
1993-1998	Page 4
C. COMMUNITY CONCERNS and INVOLVEMENT	Page 5
D. DESIGN OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROGRAM	Page 5
E. COMMUNITY RELATIONS ACTIVITIES AND TIMING	Page 6
GLOSSARY	Page 10
FIGURE 1. Site Location Plan	Page 11
FIGURE 2. Aerovox, Inc., Facility	Page 12
APPENDIX A: Federal, State and Local Officials	Page 13
APPENDIX B: Newspaper Articles	Page 14
APPENDIX C: <i>Roadmap to Superfund: From Discovery to Cleanup</i>	Page 15

A. OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN

This community relations plan (CRP) describes and explains EPA's strategies to address the needs and concerns of community members and other parties affected by the Aerovox Superfund Site in New Bedford, Massachusetts. This CRP is designed to involve affected residents, town officials, and relevant local environmental groups in decision-making regarding the cleanup and monitoring of the site.

Town officials and active neighboring residents are essential resources for the success of this plan because they have a comprehensive understanding of the Aerovox facility and hold visible positions of responsibility within the community. They are considered key points of contact to communicate with the broader community. The successful cleanup of the Aerovox site hinges on informed citizen involvement in each step of the Superfund process.

The U.S. EPA New England office is primarily responsible for planning the Aerovox site cleanup and implementing community relations plans related to site activities.

This community relations plan outlines the history and physical description of the Aerovox facility and property, including a description of inspections and removals conducted by EPA, MA DEP, and/or private consultants to Aerovox, Inc. Moreover, a detailed description of planned and required community outreach activities is provided, designed to address the specific concerns and issues that apply to the communities affected by the site.

B. SITE DESCRIPTION

The 10- acre Aerovox Site ("the Site") is located within a highly developed urban/industrial neighborhood at 740 Belleville Avenue in New Bedford, Massachusetts. (See Figure 1) Since 1938, the three-story, 450,000 square foot manufacturing building on the Site has been used to produce film, paper and aluminum electrolytic capacitors. PCB capacitors were manufactured at the facility from the mid-1940's until October 14, 1978, during which time approximately 100,000,000 pounds of PCBs were used. Aerovox, Inc., sells its products to original equipment manufacturers worldwide as components in electrical and electronic equipment. The company also has operations in Huntsville, Alabama; Juarez, Mexico; and, Weymouth, England.

The ground surface at the Site slopes gently from the west to the east, with an elevation of 14 feet above mean sea level (MSL) along the west edge, while the elevation toward the eastern edge of the property is generally between 4 and 7 feet above MSL. The Site is bordered by the Acushnet River to its east, where a seawall has been constructed along its banks. (See Figure 2)

C. SITE HISTORY: Inspections and Removal Actions

1981-1993

In 1981, EPA Headquarters contractors conducted an inspection of an unpaved area at the eastern end of the site along the Acushnet River, and an unpaved strip of land north of the manufacturing building on the site under the authority of the Toxic Substances Control Act ("TSCA"). Results of the investigation indicated the presence of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in the soil at concentrations exceeding 50 ppm. The EPA has determined that PCBs are probable human carcinogens with prolonged exposure to concentrations at or above 50 ppm.

Based on these findings, the Site was referred to the EPA-New England Superfund Program. In 1982, Aerovox, Inc., entered into a Consent Order with the U.S. EPA under Section 106 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act ("CERCLA"), to participate in addressing contamination at the site. Aerovox entered into a similar Consent Order with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Quality Engineering ("DEQE", now known as the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, "MADEP").

Under the Consent Order, between 1983 and 1984 Aerovox covered the rear of the facility with an asphalt cap; installed a steel sheet pile cutoff wall to serve as a vertical barrier to groundwater and tidal flow into and out of the impacted soils; and, installed groundwater monitoring stations.

Between 1988 and 1990, Aerovox removed hazardous materials and substances from the Site and performed enforcement activities. Following the removal of two 10,000-gallon No. 6 fuel oil storage tanks and one 250-gallon condensate collection tank from a former concrete oil containment bunker located south of the manufacturing building boiler room, Aerovox reported a release of petroleum onto the property.

Subsequently, MADEP requested an assessment of soil and groundwater in the vicinity of the former concrete oil containment bunker located south of the manufacturing building boiler room (See Figure 2). GHR Engineering Corporation (GHR) conducted the assessment which involved the installation/sampling of soil borings and monitoring wells to determine the extent of petroleum contamination in the area.

Based on the results of the assessment, the MADEP required the implementation of a short-term cleanup to significantly reduce or eliminate the potential for further oil migration from the vicinity of the concrete oil containment bunker. The short-term measure included the following work:

- ✓ Removal of petroleum product and water from the concrete oil containment bunker;
- ✓ Excavation of petroleum-impacted soils for on-site treatment and recycling for use as an asphalt base course for the parking lot; and,
- ✓ Construction of an oil-water separator to control and recover floating petroleum product and post-construction monitoring of the oil-water separator system.

The short-term cleanup construction activities were completed in the fall of 1990. The MADEP officially determined by letter dated July 26, 1993 that no further remedial action was necessary related to the concrete oil containment bunker area.

1993-1998

In June 1997, the EPA inspected the manufacturing building on the Site. As part of the inspection, EPA collected wood shaving samples from the floor areas inside the building and collected oil samples from various oil storage tanks/degreaser operations and analyzed these samples for the presence of PCBs. The sampling results for the wood shavings indicated the presence of PCBs at concentrations exceeding 50 ppm. However, PCBs were not detected above detection limits in the oil samples collected from tanks/degreasing units at the Aerovox facility.

In October 1997 under EPA oversight, East Coast Engineering, Inc., and Cistar Associates - contractors for Aerovox - collected additional building materials and air samples in the facility for PCB analysis. The results indicated the presence of PCBs at concentrations greater than acceptable levels as determined in the EPA PCB Spill Policy (40 CFR Part 761.120) and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health ("NIOSH").

In November 1997, Blasland, Bouck & Lee, Inc. - another consultant for Aerovox - conducted additional sampling of building materials and equipment. The purpose of this additional sampling was to:

- ◆ supplement the existing PCB database for the facility;
- ◆ determine the approximate extent of impacted building materials;
- ◆ develop information regarding the approximate quantities of different building materials; and,
- ◆ characterize PCB concentrations on equipment surfaces inside the building.

BBL also collected soil samples from beneath the concrete floor slab of the manufacturing building in February 1998. Results of the additional sampling indicated the presence of PCBs at concentrations greater than 50 ppm, which is the level above which EPA requires cleanup action to reduce risks to human health and the environment.

EPA will evaluate various alternative cleanup strategies for the site during the summer of 1998. This evaluation process will be based on an *Engineering Evaluation and Cost Analysis*, and will incorporate public comment and preferences as part of the final decision, which will outline a cleanup strategy that is adequately protective of human health and the environment, and cost-effective.

In the next section, a brief description of the New Bedford community is provided and the steps taken thus far by the community to participate in the cleanup process.

C. COMMUNITY CONCERNS and INVOLVEMENT

The New Bedford Aerovox facility employs over 500 workers, most of whom reside immediately adjacent to the property and in the surrounding New Bedford community. According to city officials, the company has a long history in the community as a good employer. Thus, a primary concern expressed by Aerovox employees and city officials is the potential loss of business and employment at the Aerovox facility, based in part on EPA's Superfund cleanup, among other unrelated business considerations.

City officials and Congressman Barney Frank's office are very active in the Aerovox Site, as they are in all EPA Superfund activities in New Bedford. In addition to the potential loss of business and employment, these officials are concerned about the extent to which workers exposed to PCB contamination in the Aerovox facility over time may be at risk to developing cancer or other health effects. Aerovox, Inc., has implemented interim health and safety measures to minimize potential exposure of workers to contaminated surfaces and building materials.

Furthermore, in addition to site contamination, Aerovox leaders have determined that the facility can no longer meet the needs of the company in a cost effective and efficient manner. As a result, the city of New Bedford's Economic Development Council, established by Mayor Kalisz, Jr. earlier this year, is working with Aerovox, Inc., to identify an alternative facility within the city for relocation of the company's entire manufacturing facility.

D. Design of the Community Relations Program

This section summarizes the design for the community relations program at the Aerovox Site and resources available to help the EPA and the New Bedford community facilitate program goals and objectives. The approaches described are specific to the Aerovox Site and are based directly on community concerns and issues expressed by Aerovox and city officials through formal and informal communications to the EPA and MADEP.

The community relations program for the Aerovox Site is designed to:

- ✓ facilitate communication among government agencies involved with the Aerovox cleanup;
- ✓ address the key concerns of New Bedford residents (particularly Aerovox employees) affected by the site and delineate the agencies' proposed strategies to respond to those concerns;
- ✓ facilitate communication among the agencies and the public using direct communication tools (e.g., newsletters; site visits and tours; phone calls; updates; public meetings);
- ✓ develop and maintain an open dialogue with the community and the news media concerning issues of public health and the environment; and,
- ✓ deliver a consistent message and chronology of site activities and events to the public.

The specific communication methods and techniques proposed for the Aerovox site are discussed in the next section.

E. COMMUNITY RELATIONS ACTIVITIES AND TIMING

This section describes the different kinds of required and recommended community relations activities to be conducted at the Aerovox Site, and lists community relations techniques to be conducted should community concerns shift or increase at the Site. Please refer to Appendix D, *Roadmap to Superfund: From Discovery to Cleanup*, which presents the Superfund process sequentially and identifies required community involvement activities during milestone events.

The basic required community involvement activities (in bold) and recommended activities (in italics) include:

Community Interviews EPA has not formally conducted community interviews for the Aerovox Site. However, this community relations strategy is based upon EPA's work and conversations with Aerovox management and city officials and experience with other New Bedford Superfund projects. The current conditions and future relocation of the facility affect the employees, who also comprise much of the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Thus, this strategy is targeted to address primarily the concerns of these employees.

Community interviews and/or surveys are normally conducted at the outset of EPA's Remedial Investigation of a site. This technique can and should be repeated at significant junctures in the Superfund process beyond the Remedial Investigation; especially for Superfund sites that have been dormant for many years. Re-interviewing community members is useful in gauging EPA's original interpretation of expressed community concerns and informing EPA of new or emerging concerns that need to be addressed through its community involvement program.

Community Mailing List A mailing list of all affected community members was developed for the purposes of sending newsletters, notification, and other information to residents throughout the cleanup process. This mailing list includes names and addresses of all residents immediately affected by the Aerovox site, state, Federal, and local agency project personnel, media contacts, and pertinent environmental groups.

Community Relations Plan (CRP) The CRP provides citizens with EPA's strategy and rationale for involving the New Bedford community in the decision-making for the Aerovox cleanup. The plan is comprehensive, providing a site description, community profile and perceptions, and a clear design for community relations.

Community Relations Plan Revision This Community Relations Plan will be revised when the Site remedy has been selected. The purpose of this revision is to outline changes to the plan appropriate to the remedial design and cleanup. In order to accurately represent community perceptions and concerns in the revised CRP, EPA could conduct a new set of community interviews in the community adjacent to the site and with other key parties affected by the cleanup.

The plan revision should:

- ◆ Update facts and verify information in the CRP.
- ◆ Assess the community relations program to date and indicate if the same or different approach will be taken.
- ◆ Develop a strategy to prepare the community for future involvement during the design and cleanup.

Fact Sheets and Mailings This technique may be used to address significant events or activities throughout the Superfund process. Several formats may be used, including: question-and-answer; neighborhood specific fact sheets, such as newsletters; and, technical process descriptions and explanations.

Information Repository The Information Repository houses an array of materials pertinent to the site, including: field investigation reports; removal action administrative records; maps of sampling locations in and around the manufacturing facility; and, screening data. Fact sheets and other educational materials on environmental health are included in the Repository; especially materials relevant to PCBs.

In addition, pamphlets and fact sheets about EPA's Technical Assistance Grants are available in the Repository. These grants are available to residents interested in working with EPA to cleanup the Aerovox site.

The agencies will continue to add information to the repository as site investigations and cleanup processes progress. EPA will also include reports that describe the type

and severity of contamination and possible cleanup solutions for the Aerovox site. These reports, along with the proposed cleanup plan that the EPA is recommending, will be available at the Repository for public comment. EPA will publish a notice in the *Standard Times* announcing availability of the proposed plan and the official start of the public comment period.

Community Updates Community updates will be used to bring community members and agencies up-to-date on site investigation activities. These updates include descriptions of activities completed, near and long-term plans, timelines for activities completion, responses to significant community concerns and questions, next steps, public meeting announcements, and agency contacts with telephone numbers.

Open House Open House is an effective community relations technique to supplement traditional public meetings and community interviews. The purpose of an open house is to provide residents with a personal opportunity to view exhibits and diagrams of site activities and ask questions of agency personnel.

Press Releases EPA issues press releases to daily and periodical newspapers, and local television and radio stations, to notify New Bedford and surrounding communities of significant site findings, planned public meetings, and site updates. EPA has worked on several occasions with reporters from the *Standard Times* to print stories on activities at the Aerovox site; especially concerning recent inspections of the facility.

Public Comment Period EPA is required by law to provide the public a 30-day period to submit written and/or oral comments on the proposed cleanup plan for a Superfund Site. The Agency must extend the comment period by an additional 30 days upon timely request. A public meeting may also be held during the comment period to discuss the proposed plan. If a public meeting is held, a transcript of this meeting must be produced and made available to the public and included as part of the administrative record.

Public Meetings Public meetings provide community members with the opportunity to comment on proposed plans, study results, or proposed changes to cleanup plans. Public meetings may be held during the planning phase of the Aerovox site cleanup and implementation stage. In addition, the EPA can convene a public meeting or open house at any time during the Superfund process if deemed appropriate and useful to involve local residents in decision-making.

Public Notice EPA is required by law to inform the public through a major local newspaper when significant plans and proposals are completed during the Superfund process. These include proposed cleanup plans, approved cleanup option(s), and site deletion.

Responsiveness Summary This document is part of Administration Record. The *Responsiveness Summary* summarizes public concerns and issues raised during the public comment period on the proposed cleanup plan and other pertinent documents. The *Responsiveness Summary* formally presents EPA and state responses to community concerns. The *Responsiveness Summary* will be available to the public at the Information Repository (Location?) before the official start of site cleanup. In addition, EPA will publish a notice in the *Standard Times* when the documents are officially released.

GLOSSARY

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA)

A Federal law passed in 1980 and modified in 1986 by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act. The Acts created a special tax that goes into a trust fund, commonly known as Superfund, to investigate and cleanup abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. Under the program, EPA can either:

- Pay for site cleanup when parties responsible for the contamination cannot be located or are unwilling or unable to perform the work; or
- Take legal action to force parties responsible for site contamination to clean up the site or pay back the Federal government for the cleanup costs

Hazard Ranking System (HRS)

The HRS is the chief method EPA uses to rank the potential risks posed by different hazardous waste sites. It does not determine if cleanup is possible or worthwhile, or the amount of cleanup needed. Rather, it allows EPA to compare the potential risks presented by different sites. The HRS is intended as a screening mechanism for sites to determine which ones may need additional comprehensive study.

National Priorities List

EPA's list of the most serious uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites identified for possible long-term cleanup using money from the Trust Fund. The list is primarily based on the score a site receives on the Hazard Ranking System (HRS). EPA is required to update the NPL at least once a year. There are currently 1,270 sites on the Agency's National Priorities List.

Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)

PCBs are commonly used in electrical and hydraulic equipment and used motor oil. Individuals who are exposed to PCBs through ingestion of contaminated food and/or water could be at risk for reproductive impairment and developing cancers.

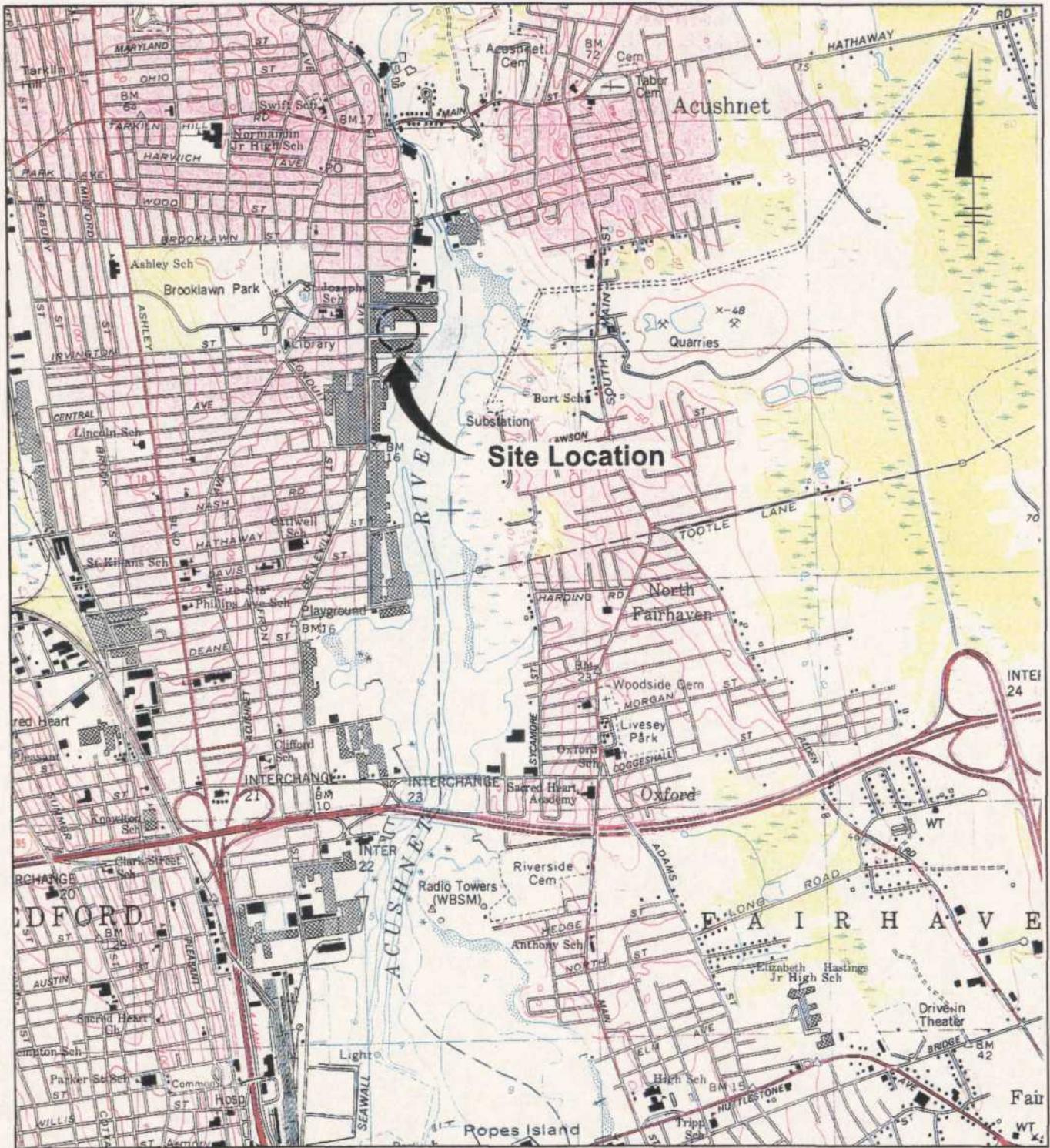
Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study

Studies conducted by EPA and State Department of Environmental Protection to determine the types, quantities, and locations of hazardous substances and materials on and near a Superfund site. Findings from these studies assist the Agencies in establishing criteria for site cleanup, identifying and screening cleanup alternatives, and analyzing in detail the technologies and costs of the cleanup alternatives.

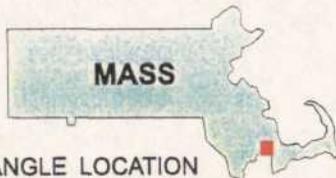
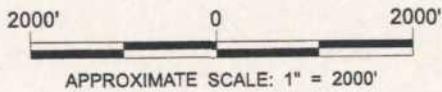
Trust Fund

A fund set up under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) to help pay for cleanup of hazardous waste sites and to legally force responsible parties to participate in site cleanups.

FIGURE 1. Site Location Plan



REFERENCE: NEW BEDFORD NORTH, MASS. USGS QUADS., 7.5 MIN. SERIES, 1979.



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

Aerovox INC.
 740 BELLEVILLE AVE., NEW BEDFORD, MA 02745 USA
 ENGINEERING EVALUATION/COST ANALYSIS (EE/CA)

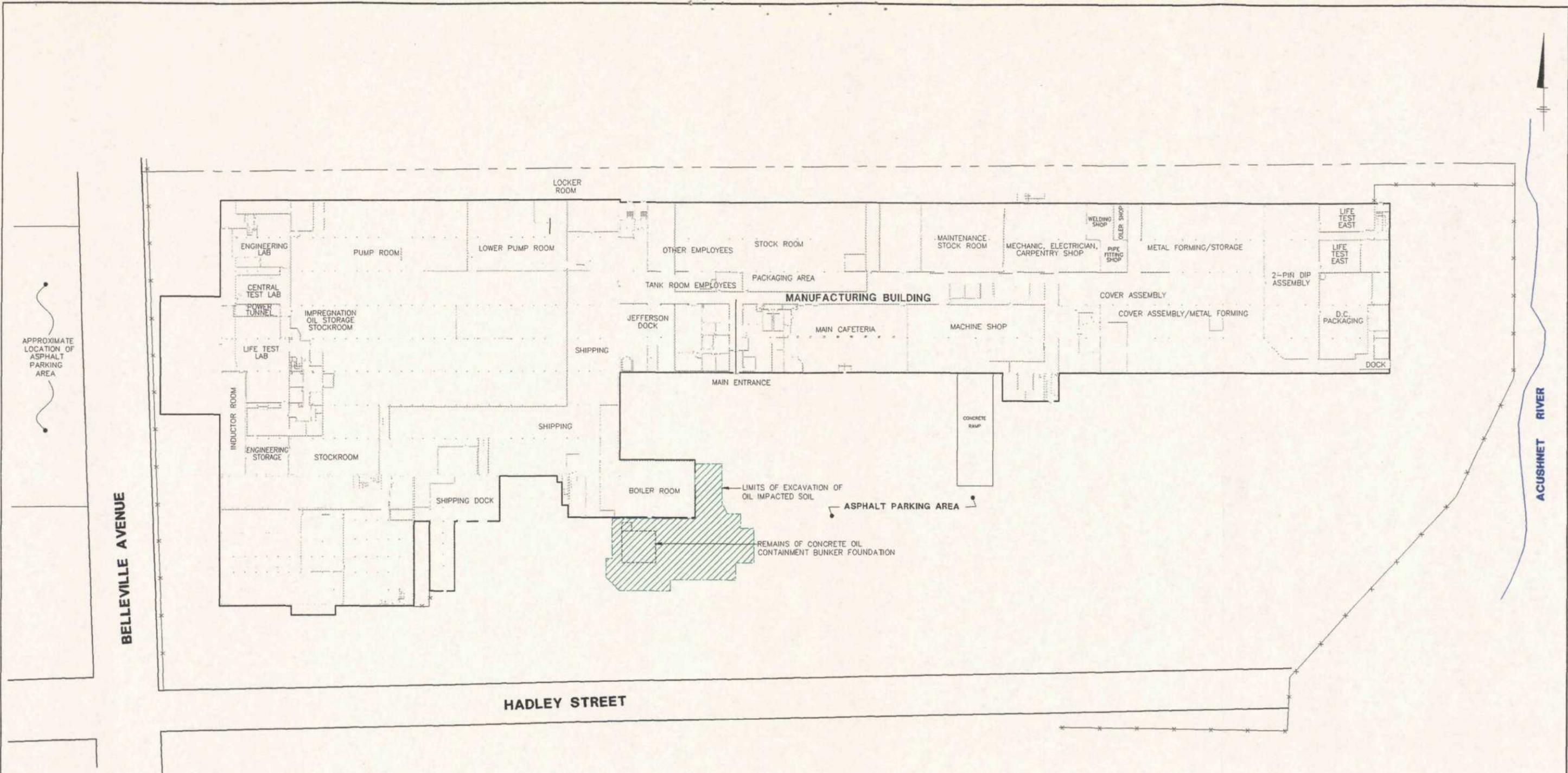
SITE LOCATION PLAN

BBL

BLASLAND, BOUCK & LEE, INC.
 engineers & scientists

FIGURE
 1

FIGURE 2. Aerovox, Inc., Facility



APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF ASPHALT PARKING AREA

BELLEVILLE AVENUE

ACUSHNET RIVER

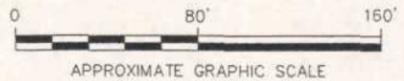
HADLEY STREET

NOTES

1. EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR BUILDING WALL LOCATIONS WERE OBTAINED FROM AN ELECTRONIC FILE (DRAWING NO. PAVXX-AG-0002, REVISION A, DRAWN BY D. JENKINS, DATED NOVEMBER 18, 1997) PROVIDED BY AEROVOX, INC.
2. SITE FEATURES OUTSIDE THE BUILDING (INCLUDING FENCE, PROPERTY LINE, PARKING LOT, AND ROADWAYS) WERE DIGITIZED FROM A SITE PLAN AT A SCALE OF 1"=50' PREPARED BY INDUSTRIAL RISK INSURERS, DATED MAY 8, 1992.
3. THE LIMIT OF THE FORMER SOIL EXCAVATION AT AND IN THE VICINITY OF THE CONCRETE OIL CONTAINMENT BUNKER FOUNDATION (WHICH FORMERLY SUPPORTED TWO 10,000 GALLON OIL STORAGE TANKS) WAS DIGITIZED FROM A DRAWING ENTITLED, "CONSTRUCTION SITE PLAN, SHORT TERM MEASURE, AEROVOX, INC.," PREPARED BY SAIC ENGINEERING, INC. AT A SCALE OF 1"=10', DATED JUNE 4, 1991.
4. LOCATION OF FENCE ALONG EAST PROPERTY LINE DETERMINED FROM FIELD OBSERVATIONS.

LEGEND

- - - - - EXISTING FENCE
- - - - - EXISTING PROPERTY LINE



Aerovox inc.
 740 BELLEVILLE AVE., NEW BEDFORD, MA 02745 USA
 ENGINEERING EVALUATION/COST ANALYSIS (EE/CA)

MANUFACTURING BUILDING

BBL BLASLAND, BOUCK & LEE, INC.
 engineers & scientists

FIGURE
 2

X (XREF)
 LAYERS OFF=0, CONCRETE FLOOR, FIG3, REF, SAMPLE LOCATION, SCRAPES, SEALED AREAS, WPES, WOOD LOT
 P: AERO.PCP
 6/10/98 DIV54-RCB, PGL, RCB
 03855063/038555M4

APPENDIX A: Federal, State and Local Officials

Federal Elected Officials

Representative Barney Frank
2210 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-2104
tel: (202) 225-5931
fax: (202) 225-0182
URL: <http://www.house.gov/frank>

Senator Edward M. Kennedy
2400 JFK Building
Boston, MA 02203
tel: (617) 565-3170

Senator John F. Kerry (D)
222 Milliken Place, Room 311
Fall River, MA 02722
tel: (508) 677-0522
fax: (508) 677-0275

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Erin M. Heskett, CIC-EPA
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
JFK Federal Building (HBT)
Boston, MA 02203
tel: 617-565-3033
fax: 617-565-3415

Marianne Milette
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
JFK Federal Building (SEA)
Boston, MA 02203
tel: 617-565-4170

Kimberly Tisa
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
JFK Federal Building (CPT)
Boston, MA 02203
tel: 617-565-3257

State Officials

Jonathan Hobill
Southeast Region
20 Riverside Drive
Lakeville, MA 02347
(508) 946-2870

Local Officials

Mayor Frederick M. Kalisz, Jr.
Office of the Mayor
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740
tel: (508) 979-1410
fax: (508) 991-6189
FKalisz@www.ci.new-bedford.ma.us

APPENDIX B: Newspaper Articles



EPA-New England Daily

News Clips

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1998

Aerovox will vacate plant

STANDARD-TIMES
New Bedford, MA
1/30/98

Firm vows to stay in New Bedford, clean up PCBs

By John Estrella, Standard-Times staff writer

NEW BEDFORD – Aerovox Inc. officials said yesterday the company will move from its Belleville Avenue plant because high levels of potentially cancer-causing PCBs have been found there.

The company president vowed to keep its 500 jobs in the New Bedford area when announcing the decision.

"We are actively looking for a new manufacturing location in the New Bedford area, either in an existing building or a new facility, although other alternatives have not been ruled out," said Robert Elliot, Aerovox's president and chief executive officer.

Company officials said conditions posed no danger to workers, and that the plant would remain in operation until a new location could be found.

The federal Environmental Protection Agency, which discovered the contamination during an inspection in June, said it was not mandating that the company close the building, only that the polychlorinated biphenyls be cleaned up.

But company officials said the contamination was just one more problem with an aging and outmoded building. They said the company would clean the contamination and tear the building down.

"Notwithstanding the identification of PCBs within the plant, the nearly 100-year-old facility is too old, inefficient and costly to meet the company's business needs," Mr. Elliot said.

"A more modern and efficient building is key to returning Aerovox to profitability in addition to being the most expeditious way to meet our environmental responsibilities," he said.

The PCBs were found during a routine inspection in June. Since then, Aerovox has found parts of the building contain up to 30,000 parts per million of PCBs.

The EPA regulates areas of 50 or more parts per million, said Thomas Olivier, one of its attorneys.

The EPA has not set a time frame for the company to eliminate the PCBs, Mr. Olivier said.

"We think they're doing exactly what they should do," Mr. Olivier said.

Aerovox has not used the PCB-containing substance for 19 years, company officials said.

It was used in making electric capacitors – the company's chief product – for 30 years.

The Acushnet River's designation as a federal Superfund site is a result of Aerovox's dumping of the substance into the river during those years.

The effects of contact with PCBs range from skin irritation to cancer. They can also cause birth defects if a pregnant woman is exposed to them.

—M O R

1/30/98

Aerovox — continued

The EPA has not determined if anyone was hurt by the substance. The highest concentration was found in a wooden floor, apparently from a spill there, Mr. Olivier said.

The company, through a press release, said eight separate studies have found no workers exposed to PCBs have been harmed, including some Aerovox workers included in the studies.

The company's stock was unchanged at 4½ per share on the NASDAQ market yesterday. The announcement was made after trading had closed for the day. Company officials said they will take an \$11 to \$13 million write-down on the value of the property.

The company has operated on Belleville Avenue since 1938 and said the already trained work force in the city was the reason it planned to stay.

It would cost between \$7.5 million and \$9 million to build a new facility in the area, said John Moore, a company spokesman.

Mayor Frederick Kalisz Jr., through a press release, said he had been aware of the PCBs for some time and had "been working very closely with Aerovox officials to put together a site and financing package that will keep the facility in New Bedford."

In office for three weeks, Mr. Kalisz made his first order of business restructuring the city's economic development office. He named Mr. Elliot to one of 40 positions on its advisory board.

Aerovox is still using about a quarter of the 400,000-square-foot facility, Mr. Moore said.

The most contaminated areas are restricted. Other areas, according to the EPA, are only accessible with protective clothing and shoes.

Aerovox also has operations in Huntsville, Ala.; Juarez, Mexico and Weymouth, England.

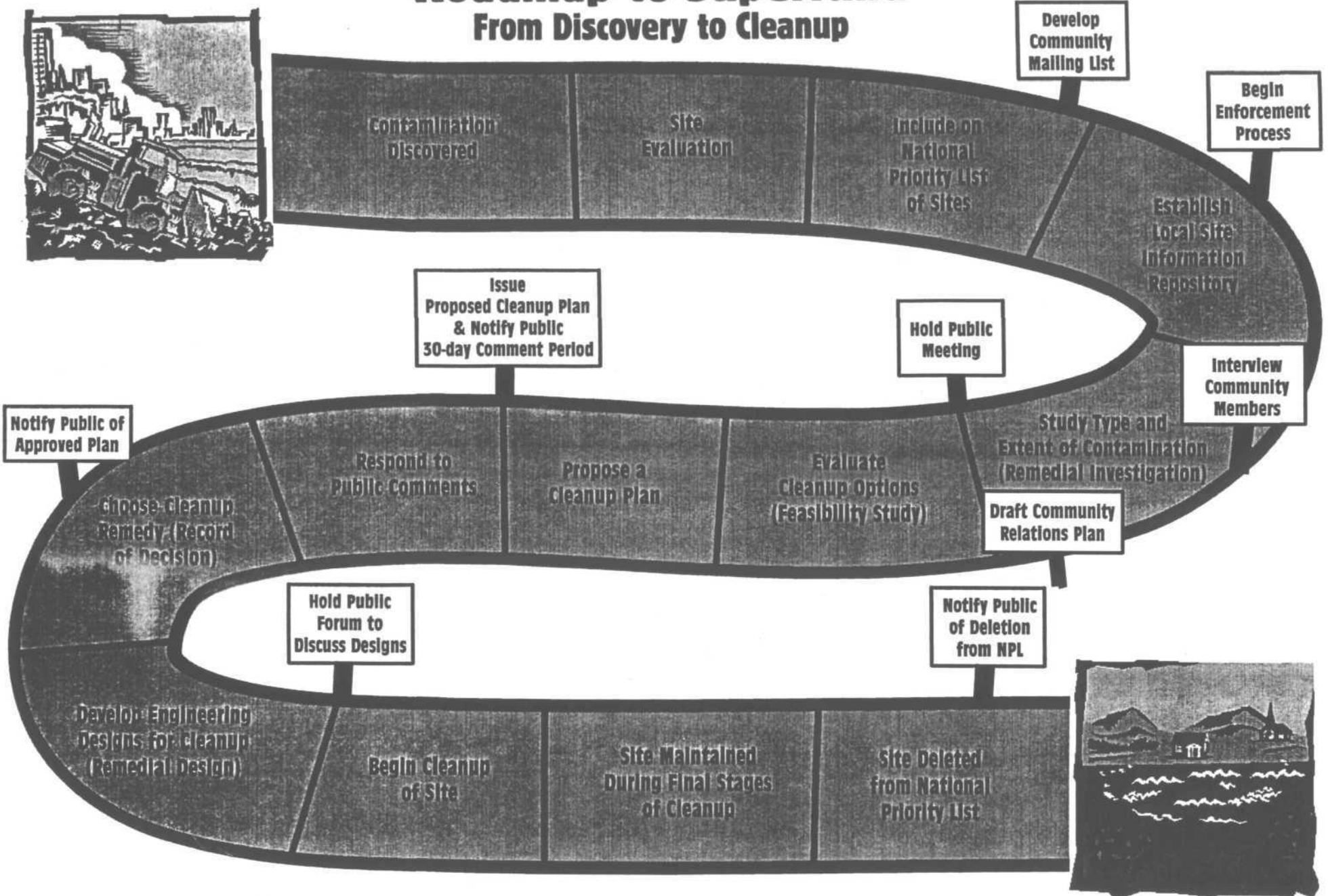
Its fourth-quarter results will be issued Feb. 17. Through the first nine months of the year, it had revenues of \$93 million.

During its last full fiscal year, 1996, it had revenue of \$124.5 million.

APPENDIX C: *Roadmap to Superfund: From Discovery to Cleanup*

Roadmap to Superfund

From Discovery to Cleanup



* Short-term actions may be taken to eliminate immediate public health or environmental threats.

Updated 11/18/96