Site: Atlas Tack
Break: 13.5
Other: 27666

# Atlas Tack

November 2001

EPA New England

## Superfund Site Activity Update

### What is happening at the Atlas Tack Superfund Site?

Now that a cleanup plan (also known as the Record of Decision) is in place, a contractor is being hired and an engineering design plan is being drafted before the actual cleanup gets underway.

Excavation of contaminated marsh soils and Boys Creek sediment is part of this engineering design. Avoiding the unnecessary destruction of any portion of Boys Creek Marsh is an EPA priority. To better define the contaminated areas and their impact on the ecosystem, EPA has been conducting a study which explores the "**bioavailability**" of contaminants to organisms, or the organisms' ability to take in contaminants; thereby affecting their growth and reproduction. Approximately 200 samples were taken from Boys Creek Marsh between December 2000 and January 2001. An additional 35 samples were taken in April 2001. The **bioavailability study** results currently are being analyzed and will determine which areas are toxic to organisms, shaping where and how much soil and sediment needs to be excavated.

Originals in color.

The **wetlands design**, part of the overall engineering design plan, will act as a blueprint specifying the details of removing contaminated soils and sediment and restoring the marsh. The designer will rely on important information obtained during the bioavailability study so that the marsh may be replicated or restored to pre-industrial conditions. This information includes knowing the high and low tide range, types of habitat, marsh, and soil, and understanding the impact of excavation on the water level in the marsh ecosystem. Once restored, the marsh and creek will be closely monitored to ensure a balanced habitat is maintained.

## Cleaning Up the Site Addresses Threats to:

### Human Health:

- Worker exposure to contaminated surface soil and sludge in the Commercial Area;
- Human ingestion of contaminated Boys Creek shellfish.

### The Environment:

- Movement of contamination to groundwater, surface water and creek sediment from the Commercial Area, the Solid Waste and Debris Area, and the Marsh surface soil;
- Exposure of biota to contaminated surface soil and sediment in the Solid Waste and Debris and Marsh Areas, and to contaminated Boys Creek surface water and sediment.

### Who is Paying for the Cleanup?

EPA issued a special notice of responsibility and potential liability to Atlas Tack Corp. on October 2, 2000. The notice included a request for payment of past costs incurred by EPA at the site and a draft consent decree under which Atlas could perform the cleanup. EPA has not received a good faith offer from Atlas. Because Atlas has not, at this point, stepped forward, EPA has begun the cleanup design. Completion of this design and the actual cleanup activities are dependent on EPA funds (the MA Department of Environmental Protection pays 10% of an EPA-funded Superfund cleanup in Massachusetts). Funding of Superfund cleanups is a national, competitive process based on a limited budget.

### What Happens Next?

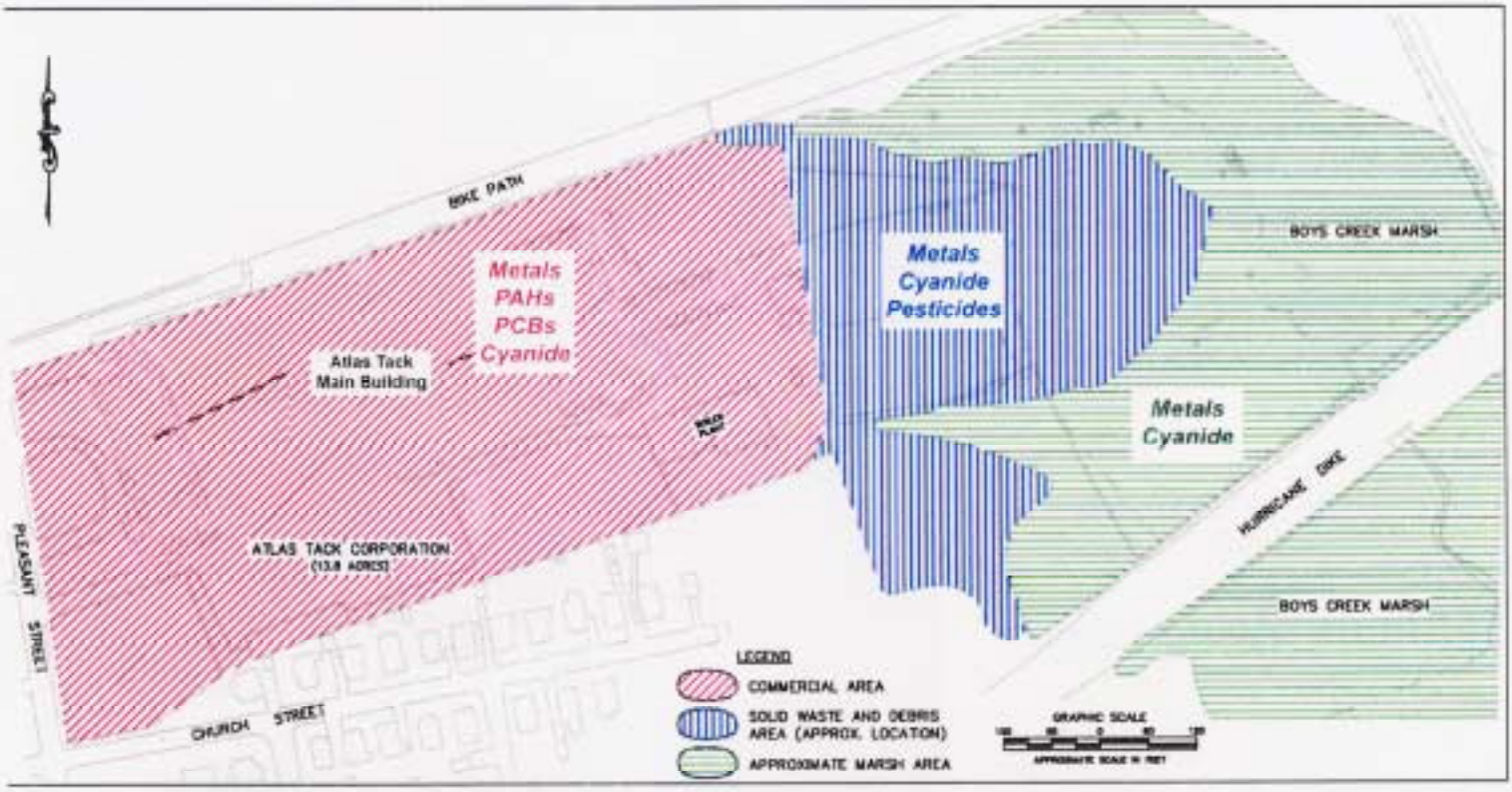
Assuming funds are secured, once the engineering design is complete and a contractor is hired, the cleanup activities will occur in three phases:

**Phase I**, beginning in April and ending in June 2002, will see the demolition of the rest of the back three-story building and the power plant. The front office building along Pleasant Street will not be demolished because it is not contaminated.

**Phase II** involves the excavation of contaminated soil in the Commercial and Solid Waste and Debris Areas. These soils will be trucked to off-site licensed landfills. Once excavation is complete, clean soil and vegetation will be used to restore the site. Excavation is slated for July 2002 with restoration complete by June 2003.

**Phase III** comprises the excavation of contaminated marsh soils and creek bed sediment followed by the restoration of the marsh. This phase is scheduled for July 2003 through June 2004.

Monitoring of the site's ground water is proposed to begin in April 2002 and continue through at least April 2014.




Originals in color.

The site is divided into three areas: the **Commercial Area;** the **Solid Waste and Debris Area;** and the **Marsh and Creek Bed Areas** (see map above). The major contaminants in the Commercial Area consist of metals, cyanide, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). Metals, cyanide and pesticides contaminate the Solid Waste and Debris Area while metals and cyanide are of concern in the Marsh and Creek Bed Areas.

## Where Major Contaminants Can Be Found on the Atlas Tack Superfund Site

Design Work is Underway to Specify the Details of How Excavation and Restoration Will Occur

## For More Information Contact:

Elaine Stanley
U.S. EPA Project Manager
617-918-1332

Stacy Greendlinger
U.S. EPA
Community Involvement Coordinator
617-918-1403

Evelina Vaughan
MA DEP Project Manager
617-348-4037

## Site History

| | |
|---|---|
| 1901 *to* 1985 | The Atlas Tack Corporation manufactured mostly small metal items (tacks, nails). Discharged and disposed of wastes onto the ground and wetlands. |
| 194s*to* 1970s | Discharged wastes containing cyanide and heavy metals into an unlined lagoon. |
| 1985 | MA DEP completed an emergency action to cleanup lagoon. |
| 1990 | EPA added site to National Priorities List of Superfund (hazardous waste) sites. |
| 1990 *to* 1995 | EPA conducted a remedial investigation to determine nature and extent of contamination and risks posed by contamination to public health and environment. |
| 1992 | EPA ordered Atlas Tack Corp. to fence site. |
| 1996*to*1998 | EPA conducted a feasibility study to determine cleanup options. |
| 1998 | EPA issued a Proposed Cleanup Plan. |
| 1999 *to* 2000 | EPA, after Atlas Tack Corp. failed to comply with an administrative order, removed asbestos from the power plant and the now freestanding three-story building. |
| 2000 | EPA issued the cleanup plan (Record of Decision) and a special notice of responsibility and potential liability to Atlas Tack Corp. |
| 2001 | EPA conducted a bioavailability study to refine Marsh excavation and restoration plans. |