

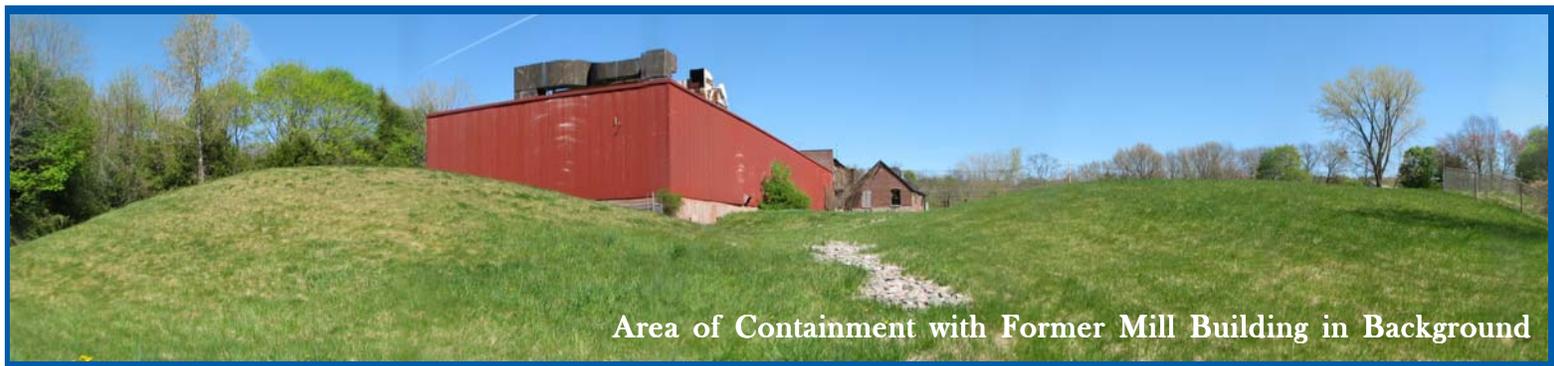
Blackburn & Union

April 2008



Blackburn & Union Privileges Superfund Site

Activity Update



Work has been underway at the site to assess what kind of contamination exists, where it is located, in what quantities, and whether such contamination poses a risk to human health or the environment. This study, called a **Remedial Investigation**, included installation and sampling of groundwater monitoring wells and the collection and analysis of soil, sediment, surface water, soil vapor, and ecological samples. Since preliminary findings were shared in 2006, EPA and Tyco Healthcare (a potentially responsible party at the site) have conducted additional sampling and analysis.

The final Remedial Investigation, completed in Fall 2007, found the following:

Groundwater

In groundwater the predominant contaminants are high alkalinity (pH), metals, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) primarily downgradient of the former mill buildings (see map on next page). Contaminated groundwater travels from the vicinity of the former mill building, through a former mill tailrace (or waterway) to the Neponset River. The studies to date indicate that contamination has not apparently moved beyond the river.

Sediment

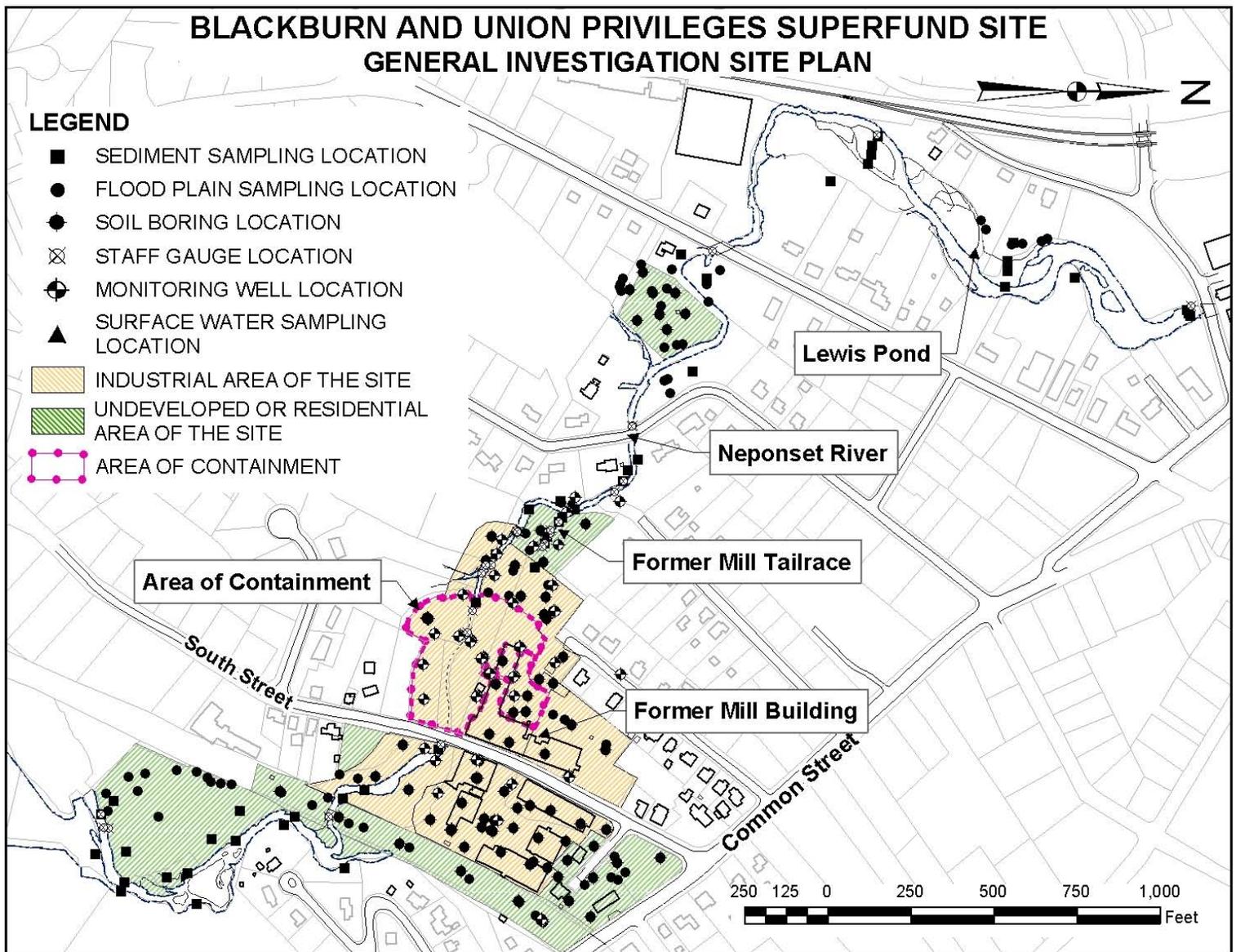
Asbestos was found in the sediment along portions of the banks of the Neponset River between the site and Lewis Pond, and in sediment at the bottom of Lewis Pond. Lead was also detected at several locations. EPA has cautioned residents to avoid contacting any sediment in Lewis Pond until it has been addressed.

Soil

Based on the most recent data collected from soil on the facility and within the floodplain of the Neponset River, asbestos was generally found to be present below the 0.25% detection limit in most samples. Soil contaminated with highly alkaline deposits, asbestos, PAHs, and metals remain protectively sealed in the Area of Containment created in 1992. Soil contaminated with VOCs, PAHs, metals, and asbestos is located beneath industrial portions of the site east of South Street.

Next Steps

Tyco Healthcare has submitted a draft Feasibility Study, which is a review of all possible cleanup alternatives for the contaminants found at the site and the sediment downstream. EPA is currently reviewing the human health risk assessment for the site. EPA is also conducting a risk assessment pertaining to asbestos levels found at and near the site.



In the spring and summer of 2008:

- ❖ The final Feasibility Study outlining potential site cleanup alternatives will be released;
- ❖ A Proposed Plan containing EPA's preferred alternative for the site's cleanup will be released. A thorough public involvement process will be held to gather citizen input. EPA will hold an informational meeting to explain its preferred alternative and answer questions. People will have a 30-day public comment period during which they can submit comments by mail, fax, e-mail, or during a public hearing.

In the fall of 2008, after considering public comments, EPA will approve a cleanup plan, also called a Record of Decision. EPA anticipates the cleanup plan will be implemented by potentially responsible parties under supervision by EPA and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) through a legally enforceable agreement.

Site History

The approximately 20-acre Blackburn and Union Privileges site is located in a mainly residential area bisected by South Street in Walpole, MA. On-site soil, sediment, and groundwater are contaminated with inorganic chemicals (including asbestos and metals), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), as well as highly alkaline compounds. Industrial and commercial processes on the site using chromium, arsenic, and mercury date back to the 1600's. The crushing of raw asbestos in the manufacture of brake and clutch linings occurred at the site between 1915 and 1937. Various cotton and fabric production processes were conducted at the site from 1937 until 1985. The nearest municipal well is within one mile and the Neponset River bounds the site's southern portion.

1988 EPA issued 1st Administrative Order for Removal Action to Shaffer Realty Nominee Trust and BIM Investment Trust to assess extent of contamination, prepare a report of assessment and proposed response plan.

1992 EPA issued 2nd Administrative Order for Removal Action to Shaffer Realty Nominee Trust, BIM Investment Trust, and W.R. Grace & Co.-Conn. to excavate asbestos-contaminated soil, consolidate and cap soil with 30" soil cover, and fence-in soil cap. Grace also redirected the Neponset River with 400-foot long aluminum plate arch to avoid capped area.

1994 Site is added to the National Priorities List of the Superfund Program.

1999 An Administrative Order on Consent was reached with the potentially responsible parties to perform the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study. A recovery of past costs agreement was reached with W.R. Grace and Tyco.

For More Information Contact:

U.S. EPA Project Manager:

David O. Lederer

617-918-1325
lederer.david@epa.gov

U.S. EPA Community Involvement:

Stacy Greendlinger

617-918-1403
greendlinger.stacy@epa.gov

MassDEP Contact:

Robert Campbell

617-292-5732
robert.g.campbell@state.ma.us

Records Repository

Walpole Public Library

65 Common Street 508-660-7340

Visit our website:

www.epa.gov/region1/superfund/sites/blackburn



Former Railroad Right-of-Way, East of South Street