

SUPERFUND

Durham Meadows Site

Durham, CT

U.S. EPA | HAZARDOUS WASTE PROGRAM AT EPA NEW ENGLAND



THE SUPERFUND PROGRAM protects human health and the environment by investigating and cleaning up often-abandoned hazardous waste sites and engaging communities throughout the process. Many of these sites are complex and need long-term cleanup actions. Those responsible for contamination are held liable for cleanup costs. EPA strives to return previously contaminated land and groundwater to productive use.

CLEANUP SCHEDULE:

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in conjunction with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CT DEP), has finalized the cleanup design for the Merriam Manufacturing Company Study Area (MMC Study Area) located at 281 and 275 Main Street in Durham, Connecticut. Cleanup work will include site clearing, demolition of the on-site warehouse building, and excavation and off-site disposal of all contaminated soil. EPA expects to begin cleanup work at the site in April 2011, and continue work through November 2011.

SAVE THE DATE

Public Meeting about the MMC Study Area
Tuesday, March 8, 7:00 pm at the Durham Library.

For more information:
Durham Public Library
7 Maple Avenue
Durham, CT 06422-2112
Phone: 860-349-9544

SITE BACKGROUND

The Durham Meadows Superfund Site includes an area of groundwater contamination generally centered on Main Street. The site is centered around the Durham Manufacturing Company, an operating manufacturer, and the former location of Merriam Manufacturing Company (MMC), both located on Main Street. Both companies manufactured metal cabinets, boxes and other items. The companies' past disposal of wastewater to the soil and inadequate drum storage practices at MMC contributed to the contamination at each facility and in the overall area of groundwater surrounding both facilities.

In 1982, CT DEP detected volatile organic compounds (VOCs - commonly found in solvents, paints and degreasers) in private drinking water wells in the Durham area. Under a CT DEP order, MMC and Durham Manufacturing Company installed carbon filters on impacted residential wells.

CLEANUP PLAN AND RECENT INVESTIGATIONS:

In 2005, EPA issued a Record of Decision outlining the cleanup remedy for the site, including soil excavation and off-site disposal at the Durham Manufacturing Company Study Area, and an extension of an alternate water supply from the City of Middletown Water Distribution System to address the overall area of site-wide groundwater contamination.

The MMC Study Area is located at 281 Main Street, where MMC was formerly located, and 275 Main Street, a neighboring residential parcel. In the Record of Decision, EPA selected a cleanup remedy

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for the MMC Study Area that included a combination of two alternatives: soil vapor extraction (SVE) would run for up to seven years, followed by soil excavation and off-site disposal. EPA originally anticipated that the SVE would reduce concentrations of VOCs in soil over time and minimize the volume and depth of required excavation.

Subsequent investigations by EPA at the MMC Study Area showed that much of the soil contains levels of total and leachable lead exceeding CT groundwater protection standards, and that leachable lead contamination in soil extends to certain abutting residential properties. The discovery of leachable lead increased the excavation area both laterally and vertically throughout the MMC Study Area, dramatically increasing the amount of soil requiring excavation.

Additionally, the results of a pilot test for SVE concluded that it may not be as effective as previously anticipated, and may require additional wells and/or time beyond the original estimates to capture VOCs at depth. Further, even if SVE was effective in reducing VOCs in soil, it would have no impact on lead in soil and the total amount of soil to be excavated would not be reduced. EPA therefore concluded that the implementation of the SVE portion of the remedy is unlikely to be cost-effective.

In September 2010, EPA, in conjunction with CT DEP, finalized a Remedial Design for the MMC Study Area that includes only soil excavation and off-site disposal, without the SVE component. The MMC Study Area remedy will remove all soil with contaminants above cleanup levels, including leachable lead.

COMPLETING THE CLEANUP

EPA expects that site clearing will begin in April. Contractors will remove equipment remaining from MMC's former operations, such as propane and storage tanks, a drum storage container, a large steel frame, and miscellaneous garbage, and clear away most of the overgrown vegetation on site. Contractors will then demolish the one remaining warehouse building on site, including the foundation, and transport all debris off site.

In May and June, the contractors will perform additional site preparation, such as installing erosion control measures, and conducting geophysical investigations to identify the location of all underground utilities. Soil excavation will then begin, and is expected to last three to four months. A very large amount of soil (approximately 32,600 cubic yards) will be removed from the MMC Study Area. Soil excavation will begin

first on the 281 Main Street parcels, followed by soil excavation at the 275 Main Street residential parcel and portions of other abutting residential parcels. Soil excavation will not begin on the 275 Main Street residential parcel until July 1, 2011.

Contaminated soil will be transported off site for disposal to various locations depending on the levels of contaminants in the soil. All disposal facilities will be pre-approved by EPA prior to the start of soil excavation.

The contractor will provide dust suppression for the duration of the project; water used for this purpose will come from a water truck, and not from a local well. The contractor will also perform air monitoring for VOCs and particulates (dust) for the duration of the project, and the locations of air monitoring stations will be adjusted daily to account for wind direction. Air monitoring action levels are low enough to prevent anyone outside of the site from smelling solvents or seeing dust. Supplemental monitoring will occur if needed.

Excavated areas will be backfilled to grade. When excavation is complete, the site will be reseeded and other areas landscaped as necessary. The wetlands area impacted by excavation will be restored. The site will be fenced. All site work should be complete in November 2011.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Demolition and excavation work will occur between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekdays. Work will not occur at night or on weekends and legal holidays, unless absolutely required due to a special circumstance. EPA does expect the work to be as noisy as a standard construction site.

Various trucks and other large vehicles will be traveling in and out of the MMC Study Area throughout the cleanup. EPA expects that during the busiest days, approximately 20-40 trucks per day may be traveling in and out of the MMC Study Area.

EPA will work with the town to determine the best way to minimize traffic concerns. Any time that trucks are entering and exiting the site, the contractor will provide for a uniformed officer to direct traffic on Main Street and also ensure the safety of pedestrians

Contractors are required to ensure that contaminated soil is not carried onto Main Street by the trucks. Trucks leaving the site will be covered to prevent soil from blowing out as they travel.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

EPA will issue a document called an "Explanation

WETLANDS

A portion of the MMC Study Area contains wetlands. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands) require a determination that federal actions involving dredging and filling activities or activities in wetlands minimize the destruction, loss or degradation of wetlands and preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands. EPA has determined that soil excavation is required in approximately 14,000 square feet of wetlands located east of Main Street at the extreme rear of the Merriam parcels; EPA has determined that there is no practical alternative to conducting work in these wetlands. EPA will use best management practices to minimize adverse impacts on the wetlands, wildlife and its habitat through erosion control measures and proper re-grading and revegetation of the impacted area with indigenous species. If the loss of wetlands areas occurs, wetlands will be restored or replicated consistent with the requirements of the federal and state wetlands protection laws. As required, EPA is seeking comment on this proposed determination. To submit a comment on the wetlands issue ONLY, please send a letter or e-mail to Anni Loughlin of EPA (loughlin.anni@epa.gov) by April 15, 2011.

of Significant Differences" to outline changes to the MMC Study Area remedy from what is outlined in the Record of Decision.

EPA and CT DEP continue to work with the Durham Manufacturing Company on pre-design work for the remedy at that location. The Durham Manufacturing Company has completed three rounds of soil sampling on its property and a fourth round of soil sampling is expected later this year.

The Town of Durham worked with state and federal agencies, as well as local officials, regarding the design of an alternate water supply to the area. The Town expects to hold a separate public meeting regarding the water extension studies on March 23, 2011.

Filtering and monitoring of affected residential drinking water wells in the area continues under State order. Durham Manufacturing Company continues to perform this work at homes in its area. CT DEP performs this work for the homes in the Merriam Manufacturing Company area.