



Pownal Tannery Superfund Site Pownal, VT

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Superfund Records Center

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Cleanup Work Continues on Pownal Tannery Superfund Site Lagoons

Site Background

During the 2002 investigations of the tannery lagoon area, EPA examined the nature and extent of contamination in the soils, groundwater, surface water and sediments. Analysis of the lagoon soils revealed elevated levels of lead, arsenic, chromium, mercury, benzo(a)pyrene, pentachlorophenol (PCP) and dioxin. EPA, after conducting a human health risk assessment concluded that the elevated presence of multiple contaminants posed an unacceptable risk to human health. After determining that a cleanup action was needed, a feasibility study was conducted to examine potential cleanup options.

In July 2002, the EPA proposed a cleanup plan for the 18-acre lagoon area. In September of 2002 EPA signed a Record of Decision approving the final site cleanup plan.

Overview

During the summer of 2003, EPA began implementing the cleanup plan that included the following components:

- excavation and consolidation of contaminated sludge from three of the five lagoons and construction of a low permeability cover;
- long-term monitoring of ground water and river sediment;

- annual site inspection and review of the remedy every five years;
- establishment of Institutional Controls to prevent water consumption from the lagoon/landfill areas, and to prevent excavation of lagoon sludge.

Current activities: Where we are now...

The EPA, Vermont DEC and the town of Pownal are working cooperatively on various aspects of the lagoon cleanup. In the summer of 2003, the town of Pownal began site preparation work for the new Waste Water Treatment Plant that will be constructed after the lagoon cleanup is completed. After clearing the area, engineering measures, referred to as "wick drains", were installed at Lagoon 2 to improve the condition of subsurface soils in preparation for the future construction of the plant. EPA subsequently compacted and raised Lagoon 2 with clean fill.

In the Fall of 2003, EPA completed clearing the remaining lagoons of all debris and vegetation. Electrical poles were removed, sediment control measures were installed and additional fencing was added.

Planned Activities: What to expect...

EPA contractors have returned to the site and plan to complete the cleanup activities by the end of 2004. Excavation of the contaminated sludge from the two most contaminated lagoons (Lagoons 1 and 5, located next to the Hoosic River) will begin this spring. The sludge will be stabilized and relocated on-site. The contaminated material will then be covered with a low permeability, multi-layer cap designed to prevent human exposure and to resist flooding from the Hoosic River.

Once the sludge is covered, the lagoons will be backfilled with clean soil. The site will be re-vegetated, and the majority of the temporary fencing will be removed. Fencing on the northeastern side of the covered sludge, between the landfill and the cornfield, will remain. In order to maintain the integrity of the cover system, permanent boulders will be placed along the top of the western and southern edges of the new landfill to prevent future vehicle access. Following the successful completion of the cap, the landfill will be routinely mowed and maintained by the VTDEC.

Throughout the cleanup portion of the project, EPA will take considerable measures to minimize odors and dust from migrating off site. Heavy equipment, including dump trucks bringing clean soil to the site, will be in use throughout the spring and summer of 2004.

EPA is anticipating that the construction phase of the cleanup will be completed in September of 2004.

WARNING: Restricted Area

The Lagoon Area is an active work area that poses a risk to persons who trespass during the construction period. Site workers are moving heavy equipment on and off the site. While EPA will take

measures to restrict public access, EPA asks that Pownal residents help in this cleanup effort by warning children and others to not enter the Lagoon work areas.

EPA will make every effort to minimize disturbance to residents during the cleanup process.

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To access reports and documents, visit the Pownal Superfund Information Repository at:

Solomon Wright Public Library
Pownal, Vermont 05621
Phone: 802/ 823-5400
Hours: Vary, call ahead for schedule

To access information from the Web:

Internet users may access general Superfund Program and site specific information on EPA's Superfund Web page at:

<http://www.epa.gov/superfund>