



December 2000

## EPA Fact Sheet

### EPA Proposes St. Maries Creosote Site to National Priorities List St. Maries, Idaho

On December 1, 2000, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed that the St. Maries Creosote site in St. Maries, Idaho, be added to EPA's Superfund National Priorities List (NPL). The NPL is EPA's list of the nation's most contaminated hazardous waste sites targeted for long-term cleanup. Sites on the NPL must be cleaned up by the responsible parties or EPA. The site is located within the boundaries of the Coeur d'Alene Indian Reservation. On October 10, 2000, EPA received a letter from the Tribe that supported adding the St. Maries creosote site to the NPL.

#### What Is The Problem?

Sampling results collected at St. Maries indicate that there is a major source of creosote at the site. Creosote contamination was found in the ground water, soil, surface water, and sediments. This contamination could affect wetlands, sensitive animal habitat, and fish in the St. Joe River. The contamination is also a human health concern, as the St. Joe River is used as a source of drinking water and irrigation water for commercial food crops. Contaminants could also flow into the nearby groundwater aquifer, which is used to supply domestic drinking water. Long-term exposure to low levels of creosote can cause skin damage, such as blistering or peeling. Long-term exposure to higher levels of creosote and direct contact with the skin can cause cancer. Placing this site on the National Priorities List (NPL) is the most effective way to guarantee the resources to fully investigate the extent of contamination and ensure the site is cleaned up.

#### Public Comments on the Proposed Listing Must be Submitted by January 30, 2001

Interested parties are encouraged to provide their comments concerning this listing proposal to EPA Headquarters. **Send an original and three copies of your comments to:**

*By Postal Mail:*

Docket Coordinator, Headquarters  
U.S. EPA CERCLA Docket Office - 5201G  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20460

*By Express Mail:*

Docket Coordinator, Headquarters  
U.S. EPA CERCLA Docket Office  
1235 Jefferson Davis Highway  
Crystal Gateway #1, First Floor  
Arlington, Virginia 22202

You may also e-mail your comments, in ASCII format only, to [superfund.docket@epa.gov](mailto:superfund.docket@epa.gov).  
*E-mailed comments must be followed up by an original and three copies sent by mail or express mail.*

## What Would NPL Listing Do?

NPL listing would ensure a comprehensive cleanup at the site. In February 1999, the City of St. Maries and Carney Products Company, Ltd., who currently leases the property, conducted an emergency removal action. Approximately 195 tons of contaminated debris and soil were excavated and moved to a hazardous waste landfill.

In February 1999, the city and a contractor also did an environmental assessment and found that creosote continues to be released at the site. Workers sampled soil and groundwater to determine the extent of the contamination. Three source areas were found: the former creosote facility; surface soil at the river bank; and contaminated river bottom sediments. Additional sampling is needed now to identify the nature and extent of the contamination. EPA needs to find out how much contamination exists, where it is moving, and what it could impact. EPA would use the data from this sampling to better assess any long-term risks to human health or the environment, and evaluate cleanup options.

## Site History

The St. Maries Creosote site is on the outskirts of the city of St. Maries, Idaho, along the south bank of the St. Joe River. The facility operated as a creosote wood pole treating plant from the late 1930s until sometime in the 1960s. The site was most recently used for pole peeling, sorting, and storage.

In December 1998, the City of St. Maries, which has leased the property to various entities since the 1930s, reported a product sheen on the bank and in the water of the St. Joe River to the federal National Response Center. Because it was necessary to address this creosote release quickly, EPA issued an order to the city and the current lessee of the property, Carney Products Company, Ltd., to remove the creosote. In response, between February and March 1999, the city and Carney performed a removal under EPA oversight.

## For More Information

If you would like to review the documents that support this NPL proposal, please call or e-mail:

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(206) 553-6699  
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## Contacts

*If you have questions about the proposed NPL listing or other questions about the site, please contact one of the following people:*

**Hanh Gold**, Project Manager  
(206) 553-0171

**Debra Packard**,  
Community Involvement Coordinator  
(206) 553-0247  
You may also call our toll free number:  
**1-800-424-4372**

EPA has developed a web site for the St. Maries site and will place fact sheets and other information there. The web address is:  
<http://yosemite.epa.gov/R10/cleanup.nsf/sites/stmaries>

Information on proposed and final sites can be found by accessing:  
<http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/npl.htm>

To ensure effective communication with everyone, additional services can be made available to persons with disabilities by contacting one of the numbers above.

*EPA's Internet homepage:*

**<http://www.epa.gov/r10earth>**

EPA strives to provide you with useful environmental information. Please feel free to call, write or e-mail us to let us know how we can improve our fact sheets to suit your needs. You can e-mail Debra Packard at [packard.debra@epamail.epa.gov](mailto:packard.debra@epamail.epa.gov).

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