United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Region 5
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60604

Illinois • Indiana
Michigan • Minnesota
Ohio • Wisconsin

Residential Area Sampling Proposal Near Completion

Former Northwestern Barrel Site
South Milwaukee, Wisconsin

April 2002

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency soon expects to complete a legal agreement with responsible parties for further investigation of the residential area surrounding the Former Northwestern Barrel site. The purpose of this investigation will be to better define the horizontal and vertical boundaries of the soil contamination found in 1998, determine if ground water has been contaminated in the residential area, and, if significant contamination is found, evaluate cleanup approaches. According to the agreement, the responsible parties would submit a proposed work plan to EPA for review and comment. EPA will give residents an opportunity to comment on the proposed work plan once it becomes available. The parties have advised EPA and Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources and Health and Family Services of the general approach they propose for the investigation. This proposal is summarized below. EPA welcomes residents' comments on this approach and will consider all comments received. Comments can be e-mailed, faxed, mailed or phoned to Bri Bill, EPA community involvement coordinator, at the address on page 3.

Next Steps

- Accept public comments on the general approach to sampling in the residential area
- Sign the legal agreement with potential responsible parties to investigate and evaluate cleanup options, if needed, for the residential area
- Make available for public comment a work plan which will detail sampling plans for the residential area
- Continue preparation of the site report described on page 2

Introducing . . .

In December 2001, Fred Bartman replaced Mike Ribordy as EPA's remedial project manager. Fred, an engineer, has worked on hazardous waste sites as a remedial project manager and on-scene coordinator with the Superfund Division for 18 years. Fred can be reached at 312-886-0776 or bartman.fred@epa.gov.

Note of clarification

Site refers to the former Northwestern Barrel property, which is owned by Towne Realty Inc. *Residential area* refers to adjacent condominium and apartment properties and the City of South Milwaukee easement.

Soil:

✓ Soil will be sampled within accessible areas inside a 75-foot grid in the residential area, on properties belonging to Marina Cliffs Condominiums, Bay Heights Condominiums, South Cliff Townhouses, and City of South Milwaukee.

✓ One surface soil sample will be collected in most of the grids for laboratory analysis of semi-volatile organic compounds (chemicals that evaporate in air such as certain solvents), PCBs, inorganic chemicals (which include metals such as lead) and, in some samples, pesticides.

✓ Subsurface soil samples will be collected to depths of 15 feet in most of the grids for laboratory analysis of semi-volatile compounds, PCBs, inorganics and, in some samples, pesticides. Hand-held meters at the boreholes will test for volatile organic compounds and, if found, soils will be analyzed in the laboratory for these chemicals.

Surface soil samples will be collected.

- ✓ Subsurface soil samples will be collected for laboratory analysis from a series of closely spaced boreholes near the northeast corner of building 4 (volatile organics), east of buildings 1 and 3 (PCBs and lead), and near the northwest corner of building 1 (PCBs, semi-volatile organics and lead).
- ✓ Three surface soil samples will be collected from the city easement for laboratory analysis of PCBs and lead.
- ✓ Sampling activities will be monitored for volatile organic compounds using hand-held meters.

Soil Gas:

- ✓ Four boreholes will be installed along the outside foundations of buildings 1, 2 and 4 to a depth of approximately 10 feet.
- ✓ Gas probes will be placed in each of the boreholes and samples collected twice.
- ✓ Basement air will be sampled from condominium units located near the gas probes for a period of 4 hours each time. Unit owners will be contacted to arrange access for sampling.

A geoprobe will be used to collect subsurface soils.

Ground Water:

- ✓ Two ground-water monitoring wells will be installed between buildings 1 and 2 and one monitoring well will be installed north of building 1. Ground water will be sampled at each well two times, at a minimum of three-month intervals. Laboratory analysis of ground water will include volatile and semi-volatile organics, pesticides, PCBs and inorganics. Hand-held meters will test for volatile organic compounds at the borehole.

Site Report Being Prepared

Consultants for the parties responsible for the cleanup continue to prepare a report, called an Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis, for the site. This report will document site conditions, summarize sampling results and assess the potential risks to people who might come in contact with site soils. The report will also evaluate the need for additional cleanup or other work in several site areas, including the hot spot areas along the south side of the fence. A similar report will be prepared for the residential area adjacent to the site, once sampling is complete.

EPA and Responsible Parties Sign Settlement

On September 18, 2001, EPA entered into a legal settlement, called an Administrative Order on Consent, with 107 parties, which EPA considers legally responsible for the cleanup. Under the agreement, 101 parties brought relatively small amounts of waste to the site and will receive "de minimis" protection. In exchange for payment, EPA will provide these parties protection from further liability for costs associated with the site and residential area. To obtain a copy of the settlement and EPA's response to public comments received during the May/June 2001 public comment period, please contact Bri Bill. These documents will soon be placed in the information repository.

Six other settling parties, which contributed larger amounts of waste to the site, agreed to perform remaining cleanup activities at the site and pay EPA's costs of overseeing the work. As described on pages 1 and 2, EPA and these parties are close to an agreement that would provide for investigation of the residential area.

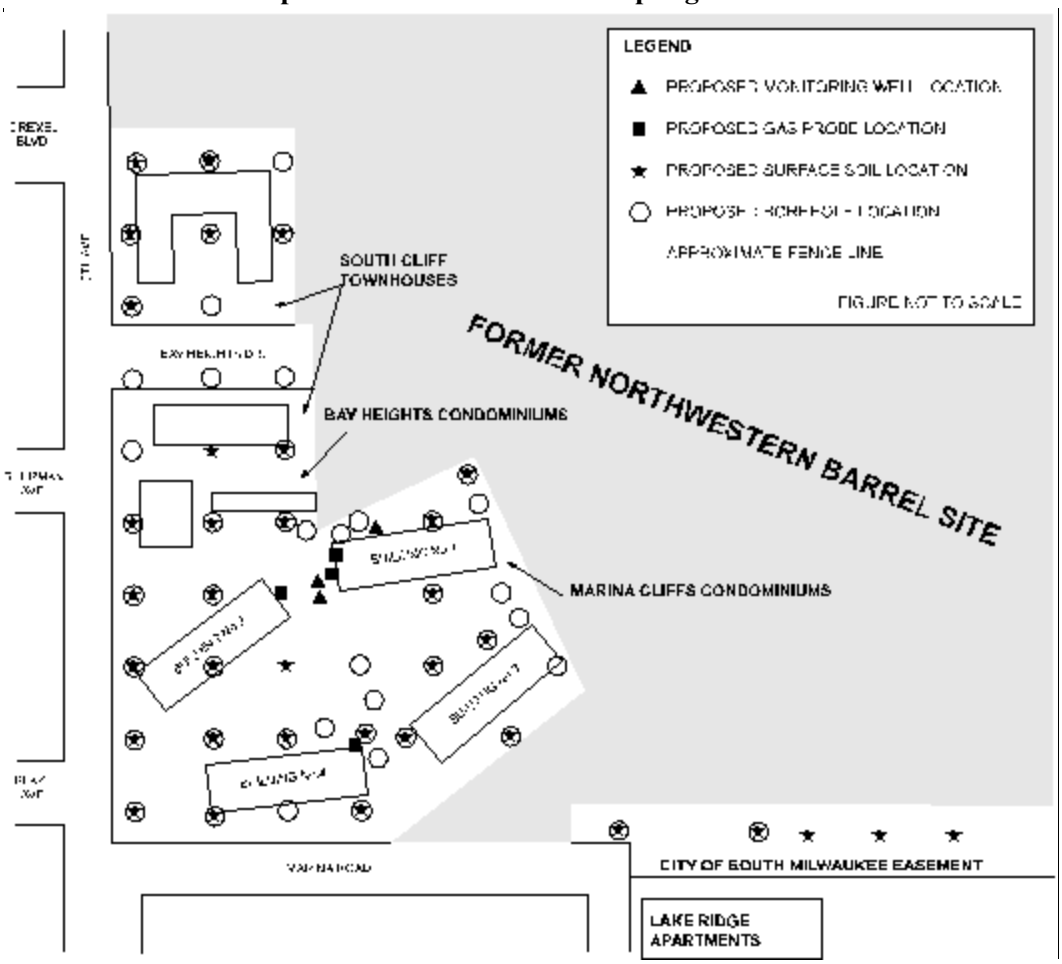
In total, the agreement secures $5.65 million to be used for cleanup costs.

Information Repository

Files about the site are available for review at:

South Milwaukee Public Library
1907 10th Avenue
South Milwaukee, WI 53172-2003

Former Northwestern Barrel Site and Residential Area
Proposed Residential Area Sampling Locations



For Further Information

If you would like additional information about the Former Northwestern Barrel site, please contact:

Cleanup:

Bri Bill
Community Involvement Coordinator
U.S. EPA
Office of Public Affairs (P-19J)
77 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 353-6646
or toll-free at 1-800-621-8431
bill.briana@epa.gov

Fred Bartman
Remedial Project Manager
U.S. EPA
Superfund Division (SR-6J)
77 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 886-0776
or toll-free at 1-800-621-8431
bartman.fred@epa.gov

Andy Boettcher
Hydrogeologist
Wisconsin DNR
2300 N. Dr. MLK Jr. Dr.
Milwaukee, WI 53212
(414) 263-8541
boetta@dnr.state.wi.us

Health:

Henry Nehls-Lowe
Epidemiologist
Dept. of Health and Family Services
1414 E. Washington St.
Madison, WI 53703
(608) 266-3479
nehlshl@dnfs.state.wi.us

Jackie Ove
Public Health Administrator
South Milwaukee Health Department
2424 15th Ave.
South Milwaukee, WI 53172
(414) 764-5060
ove@ci.south-milwaukee.wi.us

FORMER NORTHWESTERN BARREL SUPERFUND SITE

Location

The 13-acre site is located along the Lake Michigan bluff off of 5th Avenue and Marina Road in South Milwaukee. The site is defined as the property owned by Towne Realty Inc., the area surrounded generally by the fence. Residential areas surround the site on the east and south.

Cleanup Milestones

1941-64	• Barrel facility operated	1999	• Excavation and off-site disposal of site soils continued
1985	• Chemicals found in site soils by EPA and Wisconsin DNR	2000-01	• Site soils and ground water sampled to determine if cleanup goals reached
1990	• Partial cleanup conducted by Towne Realty Inc.	May, 2001	• Temporary fencing installed around two soil hot spots along south side of site
1996	• Waste materials excavated from two pits and stockpiled	Sept., 2001	• EPA signs Administrative Order on Consent with parties, settling past and future cleanup costs
1997	• Wastes treated and disposed of off site • Residential surface soils sampled for lead	Sept., 2001	• Chain link fence replaced snow fence at hot spots
1998	• Contaminated site soils excavated and disposed of off site • Residential soils sampled for various chemicals in March and June	2001-02	• Residential sampling plans developed

Office of Public Affairs (P-19J)
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