
Update: Studies Prepare for Eventual Cleanup Plan

Flexible Products Corp.

Crest Hill, Illinois

April 2010

For more information

The following EPA team members can be contacted for questions, comments or more information about the ongoing work at the FPC site:

Jennifer Dodds

EPA Remedial Project Manager
312-886-1484
dodds.jennifer@epa.gov

Rafael P. Gonzalez

EPA Public Affairs Specialist
312-886-0269
gonzalez.rafaelp@epa.gov

Region 5 address:

EPA Region 5
77 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604

Region 5 toll-free:

800-621-8431, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.,
weekdays

Environmental investigations have been occurring at the Flexible Products Co.'s former Crest Hill, Ill., facility with the goal of proposing cleanup options for the property located at 2050 N. Broadway St. FPC is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Dow Chemical Co. and currently owns the 9-acre facility. In 2008 a legal agreement called a "voluntary corrective action agreement" was signed by Dow and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to clean up the site with the ultimate goal of reusing the area.

About 4 acres near the center of the site was originally used as a limestone quarry that operated from about 1840 through the early 1900s. The site was owned by a lumber company until the early 1970s when it was sold to a trucking company whose former owners began filling the quarry with refuse including construction debris, slag, and petroleum tank bottoms and sludges. A urethane foam manufacturing company began constructing a manufacturing complex in phases starting in the early 1970s. The manufacturing plant made urethane foam products from the early 1970s until it was shut down in 2004. Dow purchased the plant and site in 2000.

In 2006 five manufacturing buildings were demolished, leaving four buildings, a stormwater retention basin, and the gravel-covered quarry (*see Figure 1, P. 2*). Demolition of most buildings at the site was completed in 2006 after manufacturing operations ceased. Currently the site is vacant and four primary buildings remain -- an office building on the west side of the site, a warehouse on the north end, an old limestone building located at the southwest corner of the property, and a small shed located just north of the office building.

Site conditions

The physical and environmental site conditions have been thoroughly investigated over the last 20 years. Conditions evaluated include site history, physical environment, distribution of contamination, and the movement of pollutants in the property's soil, sediment (bottom of retention basin), indoor and outdoor air, and ground water (underground water). This information was summarized and presented in a document called the "Current Conditions Report" as well as other technical reports that can be found at the Crest Hill Public Library and the EPA Region 5 Records Center in downtown Chicago. The existing chemical results for soil, sediment, surface water, ground water, soil vapor, and indoor air have been screened to evaluate potential threats to human health and the environment. Screening levels were established using EPA criteria for human health, ecological, and environmental protection.

Groundwater

A network of monitoring wells and associated environmental investigations show that ground water was primarily affected by the petroleum-based fill

materials placed in the former quarry near the center of the site. The affected ground water has stabilized, but monitoring data collected from 1988 through 2009 has confirmed that ground water containing contamination remains under the site. In addition to continued monitoring of the ground water wells on-site, one of the protective measures that will be taken is a restriction on any ground water use at the location.

Soil

Based on EPA's review of investigation results, any future risks from exposure to surface soil (0-6 inches) and subsurface soil (below 6 inches) on-site would be limited to future construction workers and trespassers. Part of the corrective measures taken at the site will include plans to protect any future construction workers and limit trespassers.

Indoor and outdoor air

Indoor and outdoor air samples collected at the site were compared to EPA standards and no excessive contamination levels were found.

Retention basin

Surface water and sediment samples were compared to EPA standards and indicated there were no unacceptable risks from the retention basin water or sediment.

Ecological (wildlife) considerations

The site is developed and is covered by buildings, gravel, or pavement over the vast majority of the property. The site is zoned industrial and is surrounded by developed properties -- single family homes, commercial property, a railroad line, and a public highway. There is a small area of vegetation along a portion of the western site boundary. This area has limited habitat quality and is not of significant size. Therefore, the health risks to any wildlife present are considered incomplete or insignificant.

Reuse of the FPC property

Land revitalization of the facility is an important goal shared by both FPC and EPA. Encouraging appropriate future use is one of the factors to be considered during the selection process for a cleanup plan. FPC has kept

EPA informed of ongoing future land use possibilities and redevelopment efforts through regularly scheduled meetings. FPC also has had general conversations with Crest Hill officials regarding possible future uses and community plans for the general area.

Next steps and public participation

There will be an opportunity to comment on the proposed cleanup options for the FPC site under the stipulations of the 2008 voluntary agreement. FPC has recently submitted a Corrective Measures Proposal (CMP). This document will include all the elements mentioned above and outline potential cleanup alternatives. Those options will be compared against established EPA criteria specific to the corrective action process. EPA will review the CMP and summarize its findings in a document called the statement of basis. This report will go out for public comment during a formal public participation period. EPA believes your input is an essential element to its success and will continue to keep the community informed and involved.

Figure 1: Aerial photograph showing historical structures on the FPC site along with those that still remain.

