

Blackburn & Union Privileges Site Walpole, MA

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.

SITE DESCRIPTION:

The Blackburn & Union Privileges site located in Walpole, MA was added to the Superfund National Priority List in 1994 and includes industrial properties and undeveloped or residential properties and other areas where contamination has come to be located. Industrial and commercial processes on the site date back to the 1600s. Between 1891 and 1915, the site was used for manufacture of tires, rubber goods, and insulating materials. The crushing of raw asbestos in the manufacture of brake and clutch linings occurred at the site between 1915 and 1937. Various cotton and fabric production processes were conducted at the site from 1937 until 1985. As a result of these industrial operations, soil, sediment and groundwater are contaminated with inorganic chemicals (including asbestos and metals), volatile organic compounds, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, and highly alkaline compounds.

RECENT ACTIVITIES:

A \$13 million legal settlement to clean up the site was reached between four parties and the United States in December 2010. The parties involved in the settlement include W.R. Grace & Co.-Conn., a former owner and operator of the site; Tyco Healthcare Group, also former owner and operator; as well as BIM Investment Corp. and Shaffer Realty Nominee Trust, the current owners. Under the settlement, the four parties will, among other things:

- Excavate and dredge contaminated soil and sediment East & West of South Street, in the Former Mill Tailrace, along the Neponset River, and within Lewis Pond;
- Treat contaminated groundwater that poses a risk to surface waters;
- Establish land use restrictions for the site; and
- Perform long-term monitoring of soil, sediment and groundwater.

Under the agreement, the private parties are required to maintain the site's existing cap and culvert, and perform engineering studies needed to ensure the long-term integrity of the structures.

SUPERVISION

Although these responsible parties will be performing the cleanup, EPA and MassDEP will be actively supervising all aspects of the cleanup to ensure the work complies with environmental regulations and adheres to the cleanup plan.

NEXT STEPS:

Now that the final cleanup plan has been selected, engineering design work needs to be done before the cleanup is started. Additional information is often

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ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES

- 1985 Environmental investigations initiated.
- 1988 EPA issued 1st Administrative Order for Removal Action to Shaffer Realty Nominee Trust and BIM Investment Trust to assess extent of contamination, prepare a report of assessment and proposed response plan.
- 1992 EPA issued 2nd Administrative Order for Removal Action to Shaffer Realty Nominee Trust, BIM Investment Trust, and W.R. Grace & Co.-Conn. to excavate asbestos-contaminated soil, consolidate and cover soil with 30 inches of clean soil and fence-in the covered area. This covered area is referred to as the Area of Containment (AOC). Grace also redirected the Neponset River with 400-foot long aluminum plate arch culvert to run through the AOC.
- 1994 Site was added to the National Priorities List of the Superfund Program.
- 1999 An Administrative Order on Consent was reached with the potentially responsible parties to perform the Remedial Investigation/ Feasibility Study. A recovery of past costs agreement was reached with W.R. Grace and Tyco.
- 2000-05 Preliminary Remedial Investigation work was completed.
- 2006 & 2007 Additional asbestos risk sampling and assessment was performed. Additional groundwater and soil samples were analyzed. Remedial Investigation was completed. Feasibility Study of cleanup alternatives was developed.
- 2008 The long-term cleanup plan, formalized in a Record of Decision, was issued in September.
- June 2009 EPA began a short-term cleanup removing asbestos and hazardous substances in drums and containers from the former mill building. Effort concludes in October with nearly 30 tons of asbestos and asbestos containing debris, as well as over 2,700 pounds of hazardous materials and waste oils removed.
- 2010 A \$13 million legal settlement was entered on December 21 requiring the four responsible parties to conduct the site cleanup.

NEXT STEPS: (cont.)

sought to better inform the designs. Various sampling efforts and evaluations will be undertaken in 2011 and 2012 to ensure refined, detailed designs.

Activities will include:

- On-site contaminated soil sampling to refine volume estimates for off-site disposal;
- Groundwater extraction and treatment systems engineering studies;
- Sampling in Lewis Pond and the tailrace area on-site to refine sediment dredging volumes;
- Sediment excavation and dewatering techniques evaluation;
- Existing culvert engineering analysis to ensure its integrity in flooding; and
- Sampling in Neponset River downstream of Lewis Pond to evaluate potential for contaminant transport beyond the West Street Dam.

Once these studies have been completed, the first in a series of design submissions will be developed by engineers for EPA's review and approval. It is anticipated that the first design deliverable will be prepared by early 2012. The design process is likely to take approximately two years in total, before bidding and cleanup can begin.

Two components of the cleanup plan, the long-term monitoring of groundwater and surface water and the preparation of land-use restrictions for areas of the site, will begin in 2011.

THE CLEANUP PLAN

The long-term cleanup plan for the site was selected in September 2008 and calls for:

1. Excavation and dredging with off-site disposal of contaminated soil and sediment West of South Street, East of South Street, in the Former Mill Tailrace, along the Neponset River, and within Lewis Pond;
2. Extraction and treatment of contaminated groundwater posing a risk to surface waters and discharge of treated groundwater to the Former Mill Tailrace;
3. Institutional controls, including environmental restrictions and easements, and the establishment of soil management practices on areas where waste will be left in place, restrictions on the use of groundwater both east and west of South Street, and at least yearly monitoring of compliance with all institutional controls; and
4. Long term monitoring of all areas where waste will be left in place, as well as monitoring of groundwater to ensure that there are not exceedances of the cleanup standards for groundwater beyond the groundwater compliance boundary for the waste management areas east and west of South Street.



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