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**Sharon Steel Corporation – Fairmont Coke Works Site
Project Contacts & Public Information**

There are a variety of sources of information about the Sharon Steel Corporation - Fairmont Coke Works site. You can visit the Marion County Public Library or contact one of the project representatives listed below. In addition, meetings of the Fairmont Community Liaison Panel, which take place on a periodic basis, are open to the public. The panel meeting dates are provided to local media outlets. For information about the panel, contact Mary Green, panel facilitator. If you would like to be added to the project mailing list to receive periodic updates about the site, please contact Carrie Deitzel, EPA's Community Involvement Coordinator.

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EPA's Update on the Sharon Steel Corporation – Fairmont Coke Works Superfund Site



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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region III
Sharon Steel Corporation – Fairmont Coke Works Superfund Site
Fairmont, West Virginia
Project Overview

Cleanup Continues – Redevelopment Plans Underway

May 2009

ExxonMobil Environmental Services Company, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WV DEP) continue coordinated efforts to clean and return the Sharon Steel Corporation - Fairmont Coke Works Site in Fairmont, West Virginia to productive use (see site map, below). The site looks very different than it did during its nearly 60 years of operation. Old, dilapidated buildings have been torn down, and a comprehensive environmental assessment and cleanup is moving toward completion. The three project partners have worked for more than a decade to prepare the property for redevelopment. Much of the work is being carried out under EPA's Project XL, a program developed to test innovative environmental management strategies. A key element of the site work is the recycling of waste materials from two historical landfills. The material is excavated, mixed with coal and other materials, then shipped off-site for use as fuel in a local power plant. This recycling work is continuing and is expected to be complete in 2009. Work in several areas of the site has already been completed, which allows for future site plans to move forward. Through the City of Fairmont, the master plan for revitalizing the property includes construction of a hotel, indoor water park, and a convention center.

The Sharon Steel Corporation-Fairmont Coke Works Site (site) is located on the eastern bank of the Monongahela River in the northeast portion of the City of Fairmont, Marion County, West Virginia (see site map). The site is being cleaned under the Federal Superfund Program, which is administered by EPA. The site covers about 97 acres, 55 of which were used for coke production processes as well as waste disposal and treatment operations. The remaining 42 acres include a wooded hillside that descends to the Monongahela River at the western portion of the site. Land surrounding the site is a mixture of industrial, commercial, and residential properties.

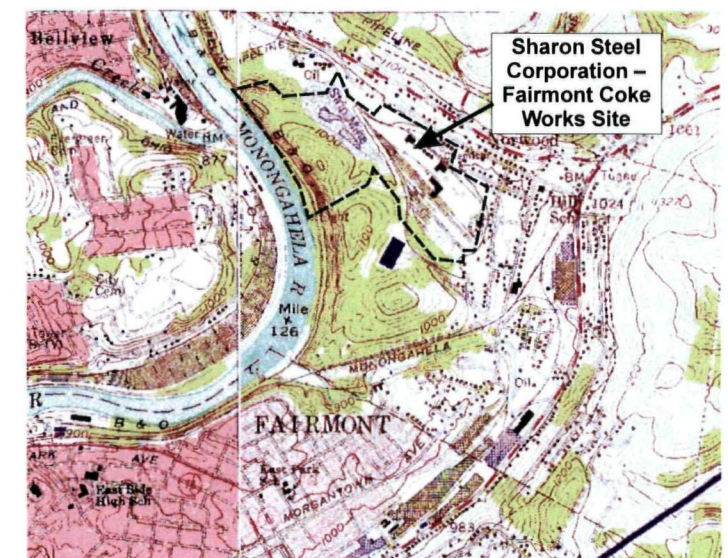
There are four areas at the site that have been the focus of the remediation efforts. Efforts in the By-Products area are nearly finished, and work in the South Landfill continues. ExxonMobil has completed work in the North Landfill as well as another area of the site, referred to as the coal-storage and coke-handling area, near the entrance to the facility. EPA is currently reviewing an assessment that concludes no further action is necessary in this area. The remaining efforts include completing the South Landfill and addressing the Light Oil Storage area.

Operational History

The Fairmont Coke Works facility was originally built in 1918 by the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey (the corporate predecessor to Exxon) for the production of coke, fuel derived from coal, and for the refinement of its

associated by-products. In 1948, Sharon Steel Corporation purchased the property and continued coke production operations until closing the facility in May 1979.

While the plant was in operation, wastes generated during the coke and by-product production process were disposed at various locations on the site property. During normal plant operations, two ponds were used to store accumulated waste sludge, and the wastes were periodically excavated from the ponds and stored in two nearby pits. These ponds and the other waste disposal locations at the site have been the focus of the extensive cleanup work completed to date.



Cleanup History and Progress

Cleanup efforts have been underway at the site for nearly two decades. The first significant effort was completed in August and September 1990, when Sharon Steel removed 2.2 million pounds of waste tar from the on-site sludge disposal areas and transported the materials to a certified off-site landfill.

In 1993, EPA initiated the comprehensive environmental cleanup effort at the site. During a three-year period, EPA stabilized the site and addressed a number of hazards by removing in excess of 55,000 tons of sludges and debris and more than 330,000 gallons of wastewaters and other liquids. In addition, EPA stabilized acidic tar sludges from both on-site waste ponds, graded the site to effectively collect and treat rain water before it enters the Monongahela River, and covered the North Landfill with a temporary soil cover.

Although EPA's efforts were extensive, more work was necessary. The site was included in the Superfund Program in 1996, making the property eligible for federal attention during cleanup. Since Sharon Steel was liquidated in bankruptcy court in 1991, EPA identified ExxonMobil as the potentially responsible party for remedial work – EPA and ExxonMobil signed an agreement on September 17, 1997 to implement a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study. This agreement outlined the process to be carried out at the site and identified a range of appropriate actions.

In November 1997, ExxonMobil approached EPA with a proposal to conduct a Project XL pilot at the site. Project XL was created by EPA to test the idea that innovative environmental management strategies, which allow more flexibility in scheduling and technical approach, could result in a faster and more thorough cleanup. In May 1999, EPA approved ExxonMobil's proposal, making it the first Superfund Site in the country to be addressed under Project XL. EPA, the WV DEP, ExxonMobil, and the Fairmont Community Liaison Panel signed the Final Project Agreement, which outlined the process for the project.

As part of Project XL, ExxonMobil committed to completing the cleanup of the site under a phased approach to achieve the overall goal of releasing the property for redevelopment.

Fairmont Community Liaison Panel

The Fairmont Community Liaison Panel was established to serve as a forum for open discussion of topics related to the Fairmont Coke Works Site. Members of the Fairmont community and representatives of the WV DEP, EPA, and ExxonMobil all participate on the panel.

The panel meets to foster interaction, the exchange of facts and information, and the expression of individual views of participants, leading to consensus input. Through the panel, those overseeing and performing the work seek direct and meaningful input regarding the cleanup of the site and its return to productive use.

Recent Progress

ExxonMobil started the current phase of the cleanup work in February 2003, and the focus has been on the North and South Landfills. In these areas, ExxonMobil's contractor ARCADIS is excavating waste and processing recovered material by blending it with coal and other materials. This reprocessing results in a reusable fuel product. Approximately 9,800 to 10,000 tons of material are shipped off-site each month – more than 472,000 tons to date – and consumed at a local power plant. So far, the fuel produced in the recycling effort has been used to generate nearly 505,000 megawatts of electricity, which is enough to power more than 38,600 typical West Virginia homes for one year. The landfill recycling effort is scheduled to be complete in 2009. Material that cannot be recycled is shipped for disposal offsite.

In other areas of the site, rain water that comes into contact with contaminated soils continues to be collected and treated.

Investigations to determine the amount of contamination at the Light Oil Storage area were completed in February 2008. A cleanup plan for this area was submitted to EPA and WV DEP in October 2008. Remediation of the Light Oil Storage area was initiated in November 2008, and the cleanup efforts will be complete in late spring 2009.



View of remediated North Landfill.

Redevelopment Plans

While the primary goal of the cleanup efforts is to protect human health and the environment, another important goal of the work is to prepare the site for redevelopment. The City of Fairmont is working with The Water Works LLC to develop a master plan, and efforts to secure financing are underway. The current vision for the property – depicted on the map below – includes construction of a conference center, a 70,000 square foot indoor water park big enough to accommodate 3,000 visitors, and a six-story 300 suite hotel on the river front. Additional redevelopment plans are under consideration by the City of Fairmont. The ExxonMobil / EPA / WV DEP project team is coordinating with the city to make property and information available as needed.

Several areas of the site – including the hillside at the southern end of the property and portions of the land across the northern end – are ready for the first phase of redevelopment. A number of other areas are scheduled to be released for redevelopment activities by the end of 2009. The agencies and ExxonMobil expect the site to be ready for the city's revitalization plans before the end of 2009.



Sharon Steel Corporation - Fairmont Coke Works Superfund Site, Fairmont, WV
April 3, 2009 Aerial Photograph (provided by Mountain Air Services of Homer, WV)



Current Master Plan for Redevelopment of the Sharon Steel Corporation -
Fairmont Coke Works Superfund Site