

Douglassville Disposal

FACT SHEET - MARCH 1995

U.S. EPA - REGION III

In autumn of 1995 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will begin on-site incineration activities at the Douglassville Disposal Site. EPA has asked USACE to oversee the incineration at the site. This assumes that a reasonable schedule can be maintained.

Incineration is a process to clean up hazardous wastes. Incineration burns waste in a controlled, enclosed chamber. The smokeless and odorless procedure destroys organic compounds and reduces the amount of waste. The timeline below shows the approximate schedule for starting and completing the upcoming incineration activities for the Douglassville Disposal Site. It is possible that this timeline will change as site activities progress.

APRIL 12, 1995

U.S. EPA and USACE sign an Interagency Agreement allowing USACE to oversee site work.

MAY 16, 1995

USACE advertises a request for proposals from contractors to perform incineration.

AUGUST 4, 1995

USACE awards the incineration contract.

OCTOBER 1995

The contractor begins incineration work at the Douglassville Disposal Site.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

EPA recently conducted interviews in Douglassville to inform the community of upcoming site activities and to get a better understanding of community needs and concerns. EPA interviewed people who responded to a November 1994 fact sheet about the site. EPA also randomly selected some Douglassville residents to talk to (from our mailing list) and interviewed local officials from the Union and Amity Township offices. EPA found that much of the Douglassville community expressed similar concerns and asked the same types of questions. Below are several questions that members of the Douglassville community asked during the interviews. Each question is followed by a response from EPA.

Q: Will wastes from other hazardous sites be brought to Douglassville to be incinerated?

A: The only wastes to be incinerated at the Douglassville Disposal Site are the wastes that exist on site. Once all wastes from the site are incinerated, the project will be completed and the incinerator will be removed from the site.

Q: Where is the money coming from to clean up the site?

A: Initially, all funds for Douglassville site clean-up activities will come from the Federal Superfund program. Superfund is funded by a tax on the petroleum and chemical industries. EPA uses these funds to develop plans and carry out clean-up activities at hazardous waste sites.

EPA will attempt to recover costs that were spent on site clean-up activities from Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs) for the Douglassville Disposal Site. PRPs are businesses or individuals who are responsible for the contamination at a site.

Q: Will the upcoming incineration cause any changes in local zoning ordinances? If EPA places the incinerator at the site, can other incinerators be placed in Douglassville for other purposes?

A: Superfund, enacted in 1980, gives EPA the authority and resources to respond to hazardous releases that could endanger human health or the environment. The Superfund act supersedes local ordinances or laws, thus allowing EPA to place an incinerator at the site to clean up hazardous wastes. The incinerator at the Douglassville Disposal Site is being used only to dispose of contamination at the site. Once the cleanup is complete, the incinerator will be dismantled and removed from the site. Putting the incinerator at the site will not change any existing zoning ordinances, a fact that was confirmed by the Union Township Solicitor.

Q: How will the Douglassville Disposal Site affect property values?

A: Obviously, a hazardous waste site near your home or property is not an ideal situation and does not benefit the value of your property. Cleaning up a site is one way of improving the situation and is much better than leaving the site in its current hazardous state. EPA has seen many instances where property values have risen to new levels after a site has been cleaned up. People interested in purchasing property near a hazardous waste site are more likely to do so if that site has been or is in the process of being cleaned up.

Q: Is EPA connected to any local businesses or enterprises?

A: EPA does not have any connections or business relationships with local businesses. EPA is a Federal Government agency whose only reason for visiting the Douglassville community is to clean up the Douglassville Disposal Superfund Site.

Q: How will EPA interact with local emergency services if an emergency should occur at the site?

A: Before beginning work at the site, the contractor hired by USACE prepares an Emergency Response Plan. This plan outlines the necessary steps and actions in case of an emergency. All groups involved in site activities will meet with local emergency management officials to establish guidelines to follow in an emergency. Also in these meetings, local officials are informed of who is working at the site, what type of work is being performed, what type of emergencies they can expect, and who is responsible for any emergencies at the site. EPA has done this type of coordination with local emergency management officials in the past for work previously done at the site. Local officials will be aware of what to expect and what their responsibilities are in case an emergency should occur.

What is Community Involvement?

EPA uses community involvement activities to communicate with the public. EPA assigns a Community Involvement Facilitator to each Superfund site to help keep the public aware of and involved with site activities. Larry Brown is the EPA Community Involvement Facilitator for the Douglassville Disposal Site. EPA maintains its community activities by conducting interviews and holding public meetings or workshops.

EPA encourages the public to participate in the clean-up process at Superfund sites. One way to do this is to establish information centers for each site. Information such as fact sheets and the Administrative Record are available there for the public. A fact sheet is a short, usually two to four page summary describing site activities (such as this newsletter). The Administrative Record is a collection of documents that EPA used to develop different ways to clean up a site. If you are interested in reviewing this information about the Douglassville Disposal Site, you can visit the information center located at:

Union Township Municipal Building
177 Center Road
Douglassville, PA 19518
610-581-3769
Contact: Lori Burkhart, Secretary
8:00 - 11:30 am
12:30 - 4:30 pm
Monday through Friday

For additional information, or if you have any questions, please write to Larry, or telephone him at:

[Larry Brown](#)

U.S. EPA Region III (3EA30)

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INCINERATION WORKSHOP

EPA is considering holding a workshop in Douglassville about incineration. The workshop would cover such topics as what incineration is, how it works, and how the incineration at the Douglassville Disposal Site will affect you. If you think that you might be interested in attending such a workshop, please write or call Larry at the address listed above.