



EPA Begins First Phase of Cleanup at Diaz Chemical Corporation Superfund Site in Holley, Orleans County, New York

Community Update

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Keeping You Informed

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) encourages public participation. If you have any questions or would like additional information about the Diaz Chemical Corporation Superfund site, please contact: Michael Basile, Community Involvement Coordinator, 186 Exchange Street, Buffalo, NY 14204; telephone: (716) 551-4410 or email: basile.michael@epa.gov.

Questions about the remediation project may be directed to John DiMartino, Remedial Project Manager, at (212) 637-4270 or by email at: dimartino.john@epa.gov.

General information on the Diaz Chemical Corporation Superfund site may be found at: <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/diaz-chemical> or at the site repository: Community Free Library, 86 Public Square, Holley, New York 14470; 585-638-6987.

UPDATE

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is providing this update to keep you informed about its activities related to the Diaz Chemical Corporation Superfund site, located in the village of Holley, Orleans County, New York.

The remediation of the contaminated soils and groundwater at the site using in-situ thermal treatment is being performed in two phases. The first phase targets a small area (approximately 10%) of the site requiring treatment with the objective of establishing a basis of design for full-scale treatment in the second phase.

In preparation for the first phase, EPA's contractor has been actively involved at the site since July of 2017. The activities at the site have included abandoning old monitoring wells and installing new ones, conducting baseline soil and groundwater sampling activities and establishing site support facilities (utility hooks-up, work trailer, fencing). Construction of the thermal treatment system started in August 2017 with the phase one operations underway in mid-December. It is anticipated that this system will operate until the summer of 2018. EPA will continue operation of the vapor mitigation systems in three nearby residential properties, and monitoring of the groundwater off-site.

PHASE ONE TREATMENT

The thermal treatment system consists of a network of heater wells that deliver heat into discrete subsurface unsaturated and saturated areas of soil. Co-located with the heater wells is a system of vapor extraction wells and temperature/pressure monitoring points. The treatment area is covered with an insulated cap to ensure a tight vapor seal which aids in heating and vapor recovery, and prevents both heat losses to the atmosphere and precipitation infiltration.

The application of heat to the subsurface results in the vaporization of the organic chemicals in the soil and groundwater. The vapors are removed under vacuum by the extraction wells. The extracted vapors are then conveyed through a piping network to be treated by granular activated carbon before being vented to the atmosphere. Water that is condensed from the vapor is also treated by granular activated carbon and is then discharged to the storm sewer. All applicable New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) discharge requirements will be met.

Noncontact process water will be discharged through a pipe into the sanitary sewer manhole at the intersection of Jackson and Van Buren Streets. This will necessitate closing the southern lane on Jackson Street for the duration of phase one operations to allow the Village to perform snow-plowing without damaging the discharge pipe. A traffic ramp will be placed over the discharge pipe, as well as high-visibility traffic barrels and appropriate safety signage, to alert the public to the lane closure. The discharge pipe will be removed and the lane reopened at the conclusion of phase one operations.

Once it is determined that the treatment objectives have been achieved, the heaters will be turned off. However, vapor extraction and treatment will continue during this cool-down period. Afterwards, the wellfield, all process equipment, and all interconnecting piping and hardware will be decommissioned. All of the wells will be capped/sealed as appropriate (but not abandoned) in preparation for the full-scale treatment.

Following the completion of the first phase, the design for the second phase will be prepared and implemented once approved.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

The site is about 25 miles west of Rochester and includes the five-acre Diaz Chemical Corporation facility which is located at 40 Jackson Street, Village of Holley, Orleans County, New York and parts of the surrounding residential neighborhood.

Diaz Chemical was a manufacturer of specialty organic chemicals for the agricultural, pharmaceutical, photographic, color and dye, and personal care products industries. The facility had a long history of chemical releases into the environment from 1975 to 2002.

An accidental air release occurred in January 2002, when a reactor vessel in a process building overheated, causing its safety valve to rupture and release approximately 75 gallons of a chemical mixture through a roof stack vent. The release consisted primarily of a mixture of steam, toluene and 2-chloro-6-fluorophenol, as well as related phenolic compounds. The mixture landed on properties in the residential neighborhood immediately adjacent to the facility and was visible as red colored droplets. As a result of the release, several residents voluntarily relocated to area hotels with assistance from Diaz Chemical.

In May 2002, when Diaz Chemical sought to discontinue the relocation efforts, the EPA, utilizing its authority, continued the funding of the temporary relocations. Subsequently, the NYSDEC and the EPA performed sampling of indoor air, soil, interior surfaces and household items in the affected neighborhood. A qualitative review of the data collected as part of this effort resulted in the conclusion that there were no immediate or short term threats to human health. Therefore, no further actions related to the residential properties under the EPA's removal authority were deemed necessary.

In June 2003, Diaz Chemical filed for bankruptcy and abandoned the Diaz Chemical facility, leaving behind large volumes of chemicals in drums and tanks. From 2003-2007, the EPA, under its removal authority, removed all hazardous substances and dismantled the Diaz Chemical production buildings. On July 22, 2004, the site was placed on the EPA's National Priorities List.

On March 29, 2005, the EPA issued a "Record of Decision," which called for property acquisition and permanent relocation of eight owner-occupant and two individual tenant families who had remained in temporary quarters since January 2002. The eight homes that were acquired by the EPA were secured and maintained.

The EPA performed a comprehensive study of the site to determine the nature and extent of contamination, assess potential risks to human health and the environment and develop, screen and evaluate alternative treatment technologies.

On September 26, 2012, the EPA selected a cleanup plan for the site that included thermal treatment of the contaminated soil and groundwater located at the Diaz Chemical property and natural processes to address the groundwater contamination down-gradient of the source areas. The cleanup plan also included building demolition to be able to access contaminated soils on-site.

The study of the site determined that site-related contamination does not exist in the surrounding residential area and, therefore, a neighborhood cleanup including the eight EPA-owned residential properties, was not necessary. Accordingly, the EPA determined that the sale or transfer of the eight EPA-owned properties was consistent with the final cleanup and negotiated an agreement with the Village of Holley and the Village of Holley Development Corporation (VHDC) whereby the EPA transferred the eight properties to the VHDC in June 2017. The VHDC, working with a local realtor and law firm, then sold the houses in September 2017.