United States Environmental Protection Agency

ARECIBO, P.R. | REGION 2

THE BATTERY RECYCLING COMPANY SUPERFUND SITE FACT SHEET

The Proposed Cleanup Plan

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing two alternatives to clean up the soil and groundwater at The Battery Recycling Company (BRC) Superfund site in Arecibo, Puerto Rico.

EPA's preferred final cleanup for contaminated soil includes excavating and treating soil, demolishing on-site buildings, on-site containment of treated soil, institutional controls (ICs) to limit exposure via soil or vapor intrusion, and long-term monitoring.

For groundwater, EPA proposes an interim plan that includes monitoring and institutional controls (IC) to restrict the use of groundwater until a final remedy for groundwater is selected by EPA.

Get Involved with EPA's Cleanup Plan

The proposed cleanup plan is available for public comment from August 15, 2023 to September 14, 2023. Stakeholders are encouraged to review the plan, attend the public meeting, and comment on the cleanup alternatives. To provide comments:

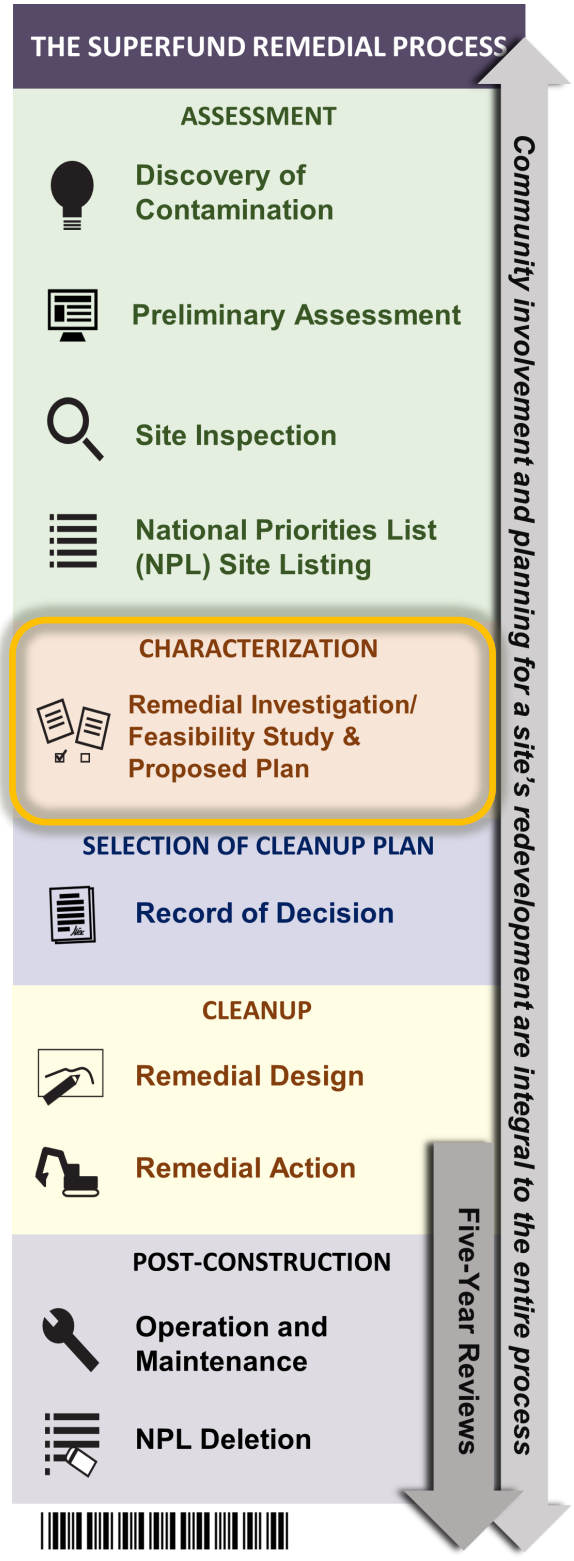
- **read** the document online: www.epa.gov/superfund/battery-recycling-company
- **attend** the meeting and provide verbal comments
- **send** your comments to Zolymar Luna, Remedial Project Manager, via luna.zolymar@epa.gov or by mail at USEPA-Caribbean Environmental Protection Division, City View Plaza II Building, Suite 7000, Km 1.2, Road PR-165, Guaynabo, PR 00969

EPA must receive your comments online or in an envelope postmarked by September 14, 2023.

Public Meeting

August 29th, 2023
5-7 p.m.
Casa Ulanga
#7 Gonzalo Marín St.
Arecibo, P.R. 00612

Scan to access the BRC Site's Home Page



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About The Battery Recycling Company Superfund Site

The Site includes a 16-acre property located at State Road PR- 2, KM 72.2, Cambalache Ward, Puerto Rico (referred to as the BRC Property). The BRC Property is bounded on the north, east, and south by agricultural or undeveloped land, and on the west side by State Road PR-2. Drainage pathways and canals north of the BRC Property lead to the Caño Tiburones. A small residential community lies to the north and west of the BRC Property.

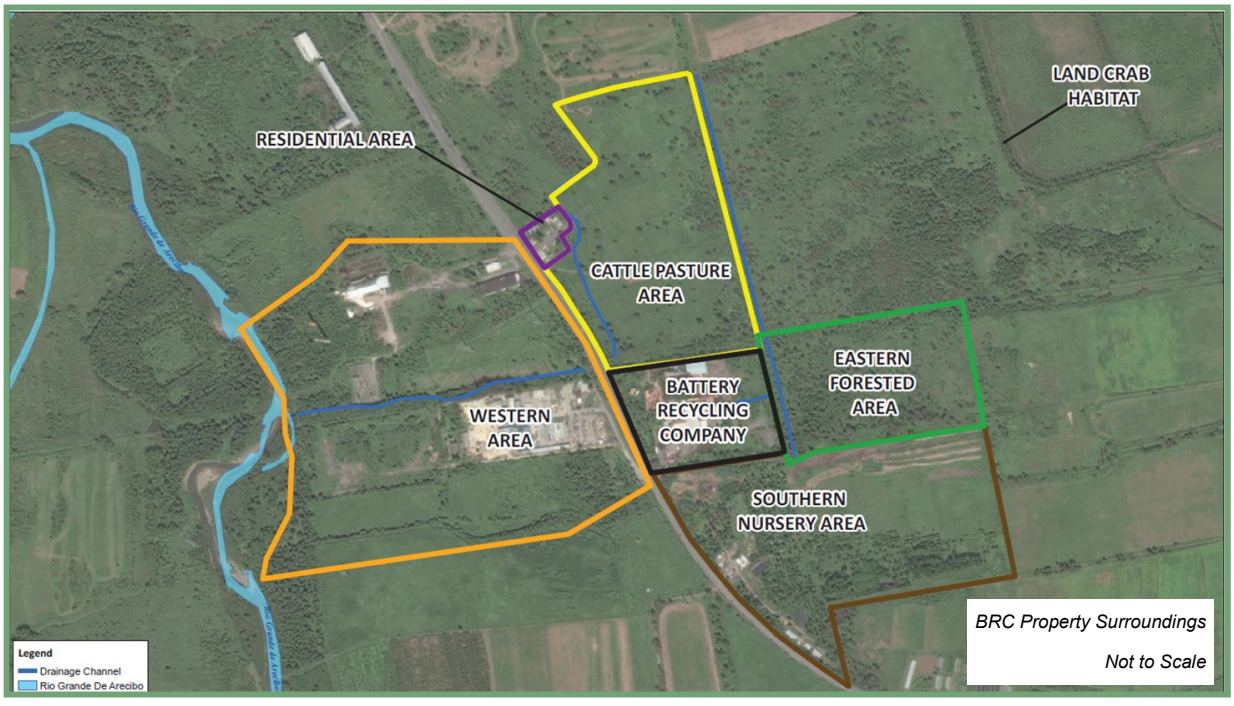
Past Activities

Before becoming a spent lead battery recycling plant, the Puerto Rico Chemical Company, Inc. manufactured organic chemicals at the BRC Property using o-xylene to produce fumaric acid and phthalic acid from 1966 until its closure due to an explosion in 1979.

The Battery Recycling Company, Inc. (BRC) began operations in 1994. The former Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board (PREQB), known today as Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER), monitored and sampled the site and found BRC out of compliance with Puerto Rico and federal regulations. PREQB also received complaints including that batteries and other wastes were accumulating and that battery acid was being discharged to the soil and surface water, as well as acid-like odors.

Between 2008 and 2022, EPA conducted or oversaw a variety of early cleanup activities at the Site.

The Site was placed on the federal National Priorities List on August 3, 2017. Thereafter, EPA conducted an investigation that showed soil on the BRC Property and in nearby areas is contaminated with hazardous substances including lead, arsenic, and chromium and groundwater is contaminated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and lead.



EPA Contact Information

Zolymar Luna
Remedial Project Manager
EPA Region 2
Caribbean Environmental Protection Division (CEPD)
#48 Rd, PR-165 Km 1.2
Citi View Plaza II, Suite 7000
Guaynabo, P.R. 00968-8069
787-977-5844,
luna.zolymar@epa.gov

Brenda Reyes
Community Involvement Coordinator, EPA Region 2
Caribbean Environmental Protection Division (CEPD)
#48 Rd, PR-165 Km 1.2
Citi View Plaza II, Suite 7000
Guaynabo, P.R. 00968-8069
787-977-5869
reyes.brenda@epa.gov

Lilliana Alemán
Community Involvement Coordinator, EPA Region 2
Caribbean Environmental Protection Division (CEPD)
#48 Rd, PR-165 Km 1.2
Citi View Plaza II, Suite 7000
Guaynabo, P.R. 00968-8069
787-977-5816
alemanroman.lilliana@epa.gov

Contaminants in Soil

Lead

Lead is a naturally occurring element. However, most lead in the environment is due to human activity. Lead can be harmful to humans, especially children, if people are exposed to it. A person can be exposed to lead through eating or drinking something with lead in it or through breathing lead dust. For more information, visit: www.epa.gov/lead or https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tfacts13.pdf

Arsenic

Arsenic is a naturally occurring element. A person can be exposed to arsenic through breathing, ingestion, or skin contact and it can cause many adverse health effects. For more information, visit: https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tfacts2.pdf

Chromium

Chromium is a naturally occurring element found in rocks, animals, plants, and soil and is used in a variety of industries. A person can be exposed to chromium by eating, breathing, drinking contaminated well water or living near an uncontrolled hazardous waste site containing chromium. For more information, visit: https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tfacts7.pdf

Contaminants in Groundwater and Soil Vapor

VOCs

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) detected include: vinyl chloride (VC), Dichloroethylene (DCE) and trichloroethylene (TCE).

For more information on VOCs visit:

https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/ToxProfiles/tp20.pdf https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tfacts19.pdf, and https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/trichloroethylene/

Metals

Lead and arsenic were found in groundwater. See discussion above.

Soil Vapor

VOCs in groundwater evaporate and can make their way into indoor air. The vapors can move through cracks in buildings and foundations and into the air in buildings, which could threaten indoor air quality and people's health. For more information, visit: www.epa.gov/vaporintrusion

Is My Drinking Water Safe?

Yes. The Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority (PRASA) provides water that meets all state and federal drinking water health standards. For more information, please visit: https://www.acueductospr.com/