NPL Site Narrative for Crater Resources, Inc./Keystone Coke Co./Alan Wood Steel Co.

CRATER RESOURCES, INC./KEYSTONE COKE CO./ALAN WOOD STEEL CO.
Upper Merion Township, Pennsylvania

Conditions at Proposal (February 7, 1992): The Crater Resources, Inc./Keystone Coke Co./Alan Wood Steel Co. site is located at 2200 Renaissance Boulevard, Upper Merion Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. The site consists of three inactive quarries on an undeveloped parcel of land in a mixed industrial/residential/commercial/agricultural area. From 1918 to 1977, Alan Wood Steel Co. disposed of waste generated in its coking facility located in Swedeland, Pennsylvania, into the three quarries. After the company declared bankruptcy, the ownership of the coking facility and property was transferred over a 3-year period to Alabama By-Products Corp. Keystone Coke Co., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Alabama By-Products, continued to dispose of waste generated in the coking facility into one of the quarries until 1980. Since 1979, Crater Resources, Inc., has owned the property.

Quarry No. 1 covers 2.23 acres and is 10 to 20 feet deep. It was used for disposal of phenolic and tar wastes from approximately 1918 to 1965 via a pipeline from the Alan Wood Steel coking facility. The quarry has been filled in with demolition wastes. Quarry No. 2 covers 0.69 acre and is 15 feet deep. Wastes similar to those deposited in Quarry No. 1, as well as solid wastes, including cinders, bricks, and paint cans, were trucked in for an unknown period. This quarry has also been filled in. Quarry No. 3 covers 3.25 acres, ranging in depth from 60 feet at the western end to 10 feet at the eastern end. This quarry is also known as the waste ammonia liquor (WAL) quarry or lagoon. Phenolic and tar wastes were deposited in this quarry from approximately 1918 to 1980.

During 1977-79, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources (PA DER) sampled WAL discharges to Quarry No. 3, ground water discharges to neighboring quarries, and area wells. PA DER sampling documented elevated levels of cyanide, ammonia, and phenol in the WAL discharge and in ground water in the area.

In May 1979, EPA investigated possible sources of contamination threatening Upper Merion Reservoir, a public drinking water source. EPA found phenolic compounds, benzene, naphthalene, and other organic contaminants in the WAL quarry. In May 1983, EPA found benzene, toluene, phenolic compounds, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, cyanide, zinc, lead, and arsenic in liquids and sediments in the bottom of the WAL quarry. In June 1990, EPA resampled the site, collecting samples from waste and soil in the WAL quarry, an area of ponded water near the quarry, a borehole drilled into the fill material in Quarry No. 1, off-site monitoring and private wells, and the Upper Merion Reservoir 1 mile to the northwest. Waste in the WAL quarry contained elevated levels of cyanide, arsenic, benzene, lead, zinc, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, and other contaminants.

An estimated 77,000 people obtain drinking water from public and private wells within 4 miles of the site, the closest a private well 0.19 mile from the site.

Status (Ocober 1992): In a June 1992 visit, EPA found three ponds filled with stagnant water in the bottom of the WAL quarry.

EPA is conducting a search for parties potentially responsible for wastes associated with the site and will solicit the participation of those identified in cleaning up the site. Also, EPA is planning for a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study to determine the type and extent of contamination at the site and identify alternatives for remedial action.

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at ATSDR - ToxFAQs (http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.