

NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST (NPL)

Final Site

September 2011

RED PANTHER CHEMICAL COMPANY | **Clarksdale, Mississippi**
| *Coahoma County*

Site Location:

The Red Panther Chemical Company site is approximately 6.5 acres in size and is located at 1201 Normandy Avenue in Clarksdale, Mississippi. The property is in a mixed commercial-residential area. The 18th Street Neighborhood is located to the west of the site.

Site History:

Red Panther operated as a pesticides formulation plant between 1949 and 1996, producing liquid and dry herbicides, insecticides and fungicides. During the period of active operations, the facility was regulated under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. In 1996 the facility ceased active operations. In 1999, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality referred the site to EPA.

Site Contamination/Contaminants:

Chemicals contained in pesticide products produced at the facility included toxaphene, aldrin, arsenic and DDT. Investigations found widespread and significant on-site soil contamination with arsenic and chlorinated pesticides. Additionally, sample results indicated contaminants had migrated off site via drainage ditches. In November 1985, a fire burned down one warehouse on site. Contaminated runoff from the firefighting effort caused a fish kill in the nearby Sunflower River. During the investigation and cleanup after the fire, 382 old fiber drums were discovered in the crawlspace below the burned warehouse. Ninety-five of the drums contained trace residues of technical grade dieldrin, requiring disposal at a commercial hazardous waste facility.

Potential Impacts on Surrounding Community/Environment:

Sampling activities since 2005 have documented surface soil contamination with pesticides at 26 residences in the 18th Street neighborhood. Levels at 11 residences exceeded long-term health-risk benchmarks. An Air Deposition Study in 2010 identified seven additional locations with elevated levels. Significant potential exists for ground water contaminant migration to the underlying Sparta and Wilcox aquifers, which supply drinking water for private wells in the vicinity and for the City of Clarksdale. Possible impacts to the Sunflower River have never been fully evaluated.

Response Activities (to date):

In 2001 EPA entered into an Administrative Order on Consent with the Responsible Parties at the site to conduct a Removal Action, which was completed in 2005. The hazardous substances in surface soil included arsenic and 13 chlorinated pesticides; and in subsurface soil arsenic, toxaphene and dieldrin. More than 7,400 tons of contaminated soils were taken off site to commercial hazardous waste treatment and/or disposal facilities as part of the Removal Action. Tank sludges from eight above-ground storage tanks were also removed, which totaled 233,000 pounds.

Need for NPL Listing:

The State of Mississippi referred the site to EPA because of the soil contamination in the residential neighborhood and the potential for migration of ground water contamination. A full investigation of possible contamination in Sunflower Creek needs to be conducted. Other federal and state cleanup programs were evaluated, but are not viable at this time. EPA received a letter of support for placing this site on the NPL from the state.

[The description of the site (release) is based on information available at the time the site was evaluated with the HRS. The description may change as additional information is gathered on the sources and extent of contamination.]

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 <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaq.html> or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.