

NPL Site Narrative for Muskegon Chemical Co.

MUSKEGON CHEMICAL CO. Whitehall, Michigan

Conditions at proposal (June 24, 1988): Muskegon Chemical Co. (MCC) formerly produced a variety of specialty chemicals for pharmaceutical and other industries on a 12-acre site at 1725 Warner Street in Whitehall, Muskegon County, Michigan. The area is zoned commercial but at present is primarily residential. The company operated from 1975 to 1986, when it sold the business to Koch Chemical Co.

In 1981, a consultant to MCC identified bis(2-chloroethyl)ether and 1,2-dichloroethane in on-site wells. A sump pump and an outside holding tank, both badly corroded, were potential sources. Over a period of 3 years, MCC installed 40 monitoring wells along the plume of contamination. An estimated 6,400 people obtain drinking water from public and private wells within 3 miles of the site. A private well is 1,250 feet north of the site.

The consultant's 1981 study established that ground water was seeping into Mill Pond Creek downgradient of the site. The seeps contained the same contaminants found in ground water. Surface water within 3 miles downstream of the site is used for recreational activities.

In 1981, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) filed a Consent Judgment under State Act 245 charging MCC with contaminating ground water. MCC pleaded no contest. Later a plea agreement between MDNR and Koch was reached regarding the cost of investigation and cleanup at the site.

Under a 1985 Consent Agreement with MDNR, MCC installed a system to pump contaminated ground water to the surface, treat it by carbon filtration, and return the treated water to the Whitehall Water Treatment Plant. Koch continues to operate the system. Monitoring indicates that ground water is still contaminated at elevated levels.

An 8,000-gallon pressurized tank of heptane is located on the north side of the site. The tank poses a fire/explosion threat to workers on the site and to a residential area 1,250 feet away.

This facility obtained Interim Status under Subtitle C of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) when it filed a Notification of Hazardous Waste Activity and Part A of a permit application to treat, store, or dispose of hazardous waste. Later, it withdrew its Part A and converted to generator-only status with EPA or State approval. Hence, it satisfies a component of EPA's NPL/RCRA policy.

Status (February 21, 1990): Data collected in October 1988 by MDNR indicate that the treatment system is inadequate. Koch Chemical Co. is working with MDNR to improve the system.

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) (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp>) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.