

HEGELER ZINC

Danville, Illinois

Vermilion County

15th Congressional District

Site Location/Size:

Hegeler Zinc is a former primary zinc smelter located approximately three miles south of Danville, Illinois, in Vermilion County. The property is located on a tract of land exceeding 100 acres in size.

Site History:

Hegeler Zinc began operations in 1906 and produced various grades of slab and rolled zinc products, sulfuric acid, and cadmium. In addition to the production of slab and rolled zinc products, facility activities included the handling of pressurized (aerosol) products, generation and treatment of wastes containing spent halogenated solvents, and the manufacturing and storage of fireworks. During the years of operation, large amounts of slag (a by-product of the smelting process) were produced and placed in waste piles or spread on the ground throughout the facility. As part of the zinc smelting process, particulate emissions containing cadmium, lead, zinc, and other inorganic substances were also produced.

Site Contamination/Contaminants:

A significant amount of the slag within the facility is stored in a waste pile that occupies approximately 5.7 acres and rises 52 feet above grade. Contaminants of concern associated with the slag pile are metals, primarily arsenic, beryllium, and lead. Samples obtained from the slag pile meet the definition of hazardous waste for toxicity characteristic for lead.

Potential Impacts on Surrounding Community/Environment:

Soil contamination is present at significantly elevated concentrations on residential properties adjacent to the Hegeler Zinc facility, potentially impacting approximately 130 residents. Residential soil samples taken from properties to the north and east of the facility identified cadmium, lead, and zinc at concentrations significantly above background concentrations. The slag pile is not contained and continues to impact surface water in the area due to its proximity to the unnamed waterway flowing through the facility into Grape Creek, which ultimately connects with the Vermilion River. Concentrations of several metals including arsenic, cadmium, and lead were all elevated in sediments of the unnamed creek, in comparison to sediments in areas that have not been impacted by industrial activity. Grape Creek is not considered to be a fishery, but it does flow through small sections of forested wetlands and supports small wildlife commonly found in and around healthy creeks in central Illinois.

Response Activities (to date):

At the request of the Illinois EPA, and in response to the elevated concentrations of metals found on and surrounding the facility area, on May 9, 2002, EPA Region 5 Emergency Response Program installed

a six-foot chain link fence that surrounds the property. Completion of the fence has helped to protect potential trespassers from exposure, but does not adequately address all of the environmental concerns.

[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. See 56 FR 5600, February 11, 1991, or subsequent FR notices.]

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.