

NPL Site Narrative for South 8th Street Landfill

SOUTH 8TH STREET LANDFILL West Memphis, Arkansas

Conditions at Proposal (February 7, 1992): The South 8th Street Landfill covers 30 acres in a mixed industrial/agricultural/residential area of West Memphis, Crittenden County, Arkansas. The site was originally proposed under the name "West Memphis Landfill." The name has been changed to avoid confusion with a similarly named landfill in West Memphis.

The privately owned site was an uncontrolled dump from the mid-1950s until it closed in 1979. The site is not secured, permitting illicit dumping to continue. South 8th Street runs through the site and is the only access to the Mississippi River for the City of West Memphis. The site is in a fresh water wetland on the banks of the river. William L. Johnson Co. currently owns the majority of the land.

Seven waste pits and two waste ponds are located on the site. The pits reportedly received wastes such as oil and grease sludge, sewage sludge, construction debris, chemical paint waste, and general household wastes. No records were kept of the amount or type of waste disposed on-site. In 1981, 89 drums containing methyl ethyl ketone and toluene, some leaking, were removed from the banks of the Mississippi River.

EPA sampling of six of these pits in February 1988 identified benzene, toluene, xylene, benzo(a)pyrene, benzo(a)anthracene, benzo(b)fluoranthene, benzo(k)fluoranthene, dieldrin, DDE, DDD, PCBs, and lead. The largest pit is the most heavily contaminated. Heavy metals, including lead, copper, and zinc, are present in the waste ponds.

The site lies within the 1-year floodplain of the Mississippi River. During 1950-91, floods occurred in 26 years. Hazardous substances on the surface of one or more sources at the site have come in direct contact with the waters of the Mississippi River during floods in 1983, 1984, 1985, 1990, and 1991, according to EPA. A nesting site of a Federally endangered species, the interior least tern, has been documented on Ensley Bar approximately 4 miles downstream from the facility. The river is used for commercial fishing.

In 1988, EPA detected benzene, ethyl benzene, toluene, and xylenes in ambient air on-site. An estimated 30,400 people live within 4 miles of the site.

Five City of West Memphis wells within 4 miles of the site provide drinking water to an estimated 28,000 people. The wells draw from the Wilcox Aquifer approximately 1,300 feet below the surface. Ground water is also used in preparing soft drinks, and a Wellhead Protection Area designated under the Safe Drinking Water Act is within 4 miles of the site.

Status (October 1992): EPA has identified 26 potentially responsible parties (PRPs) at the site. On May 23, EPA issued a Unilateral Administrative Order under CERCLA Section 104 requiring the PRPs to (1) fence the site to limit public access and (2) investigate the largest pit on the site to determine whether it

can be cleaned up in an expedited cleanup. On April 16, 1992, EPA held a public meeting to inform the citizens about the site and EPA's plans.

The PRPs have constructed the fence and submitted a workplan to investigate the pit and the surrounding area. After the PRPs rejected EPA's offer to allow them to perform the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study, EPA started the work in late summer.

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.