NPL Site Narrative for Agriculture Street Landfill

AGRICULTURE STREET LANDFILL
New Orleans, Louisiana

Conditions at Proposal (August 23, 1994): The Agriculture Street Landfill site is located in New Orleans, Orleans Parish, Louisiana, approximately 3 miles south of Lake Pontchartrain. The site is bounded on the north by Higgins Boulevard, on the east by Piety Street, on the south by Florida Avenue, and on the west by Almonaster Avenue.

The Agriculture Street Landfill site was used as a municipal landfill as early as 1910. There is little information available regarding what was deposited in the landfill during this time period. Review of available file material suggests that the landfill received both solid and liquid wastes. This practice continued until 1950, when the advent of incinerators for ultimate disposal of these wastes was instituted. After the commissioning of the Florida Street Incineration Facility, combustible waste was incinerated and the ashes were disposed in the landfill. In approximately 1958, the operation at the landfill was interrupted; in 1965, the landfill reopened after Hurricane Betsy hit the City of New Orleans. Debris from destroyed buildings and furnishings were reportedly deposited at a rate of up to 300 truck loads per day. The debris was burned in the open dump; the area was covered with ashes from the city incinerators and compacted with bulldozers.

Residential and commercial development of the area began in the mid-1970s and continued until 1987. Low income housing was constructed within the original boundaries of the landfill, including approximately 250 residences and the Gordon Plaza Apartments. The majority of the residents are minorities.

A Site Inspection (SI) was conducted by EPA Region 6 on May 20 and 21, 1986. During the inspection, a total of 45 soil samples were collected on site. Results from the SI indicated that lead, zinc, mercury, cadmium, and arsenic were elevated in some samples. Concentrations in 12 of the 45 total samples exceeded 1,000 ppm lead, with three samples having lead concentrations greater than 4,000 ppm. The highest lead concentrations were found in an undeveloped area along the western and southern site boundaries; however, elevated lead levels were also found in other residential sample locations. Polynuclear Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PNAs) were detected in almost every soil sample.

EPA Region 6 completed an Expanded Site Inspection in September 1993 at this site. EPA collected 133 surface soil samples and five subsurface soil samples from the site, residential yards, and school yards surrounding the site. Soil contamination is of concern due to observed contamination within residential yards. Chemical analyses of surface soil samples collected from 24 residential yards revealed the presence of arsenic and benzo(a)pyrene.

Status (December 1994): A Remedial Investigation (RI) was completed in November 1994. The Feasibility Study is expected to be completed in early 1995 and will be released for public comments on possible remedies for the site.

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.