

NPL Site Narrative for Crystal Chemical Co.

CRYSTAL CHEMICAL CO. Houston, Texas

Conditions at listing (July 1982): Crystal Chemical Co. started to produce arsenic-based pesticides on a site in Houston, Harris County, Texas, in 1968. During plant operations, containers of both raw and finished materials were stored in the open on the ground. The materials subsequently spilled and leaked into the soil. Arsenic materials spread outside of the process area in June 1976 when rain caused waste water ponds to overflow. In 1980, the State issued Crystal a "no discharge order." Crystal responded by building a dike around the plant and took other remedial actions. However, when EPA imposed a civil penalty of \$112,600 for violations of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, Crystal determined that taking corrective action to prevent further incidents would be too expensive. Crystal declared bankruptcy in October 1981.

Status (July 1983): Between September 1981 and late 1982, EPA used \$276,000 in CERCLA emergency funds to: (1) dewater the site, (2) fill in the ponds with contaminated soils, (3) temporarily cap most of the plant site with 6 inches of clay, and (4) add topsoil and seed.

In November 1982, EPA awarded a \$369,000 Cooperative Agreement to Texas for a remedial investigation to determine the type and extent of contamination at the site and a feasibility study to identify alternatives for remedial action. The work is scheduled to be completed in the second quarter of 1984. In September 1983, EPA filed with the bankruptcy court to recover Federal funds expended at 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) (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp>) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.