NPL Site Narrative for Montrose Chemical Corp.

MONTROSE CHEMICAL CORP.
Torrance, California

Conditions at proposal (October 15, 1984): Montrose Chemical Corp. manufactured DDT on a 13-acre site in a light industrial/residential area of Torrance, Los Angeles County, California, from 1947 until 1982. About 3,000 people live or work within 0.25 mile of the site.

The company's operations included formulation, grinding, packaging, and distribution of DDT. According to analyses conducted by EPA, Montrose, and various State and local agencies, on- and off-site soils, surface water, and sediments are contaminated with DDT. The major transport mechanisms identified were storm water run-off and aerial emissions.

On May 6, 1983, EPA issued an Administrative Order under CERCLA Section 106 requiring Montrose Chemical to cease all discharges of DDT and to initiate a study to determine the nature and extent of contamination. After a more detailed review of the Montrose site, EPA determined that further work was necessary to characterize the site and evaluate alternatives. Therefore, EPA prepared a workplan for a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS). This second phase of investigation will assess all areas of contamination, both on- and off-site, and any public health and environmental impacts.

Status (June 1986): In February 1985, Montrose installed a temporary asphalt cover over the site. EPA did not endorse this activity.

In the summer of 1985, EPA conducted Part I of the RI. On-site sampling found high levels of contamination at 77-foot depths in soil and in shallow ground water. In October 1985, Montrose and EPA signed an Administrative Order under CERCLA Section 106 requiring Montrose to conduct Part II of the RI, which includes on-site sampling of ground water and off-site sampling of soil, sediments, surface water, and ground water.

Status (November 1988): During July 1986, EPA sampled off-site dust and soil and verified that DDT migrated off-site via aerial dispersion.

In November 1986, Montrose completed Phase I sampling under Part II of the RI. Results indicated that soils near the site are contaminated with high levels of DDT, and that the two shallower aquifers in the four-aquifer system underlying the site are contaminated with DDT and monochlorobenzene.

In October 1987, EPA and Montrose signed an amendment to the October 1985 Administrative Order, calling for both on- and off-site sampling of the two deeper aquifers in the four-aquifer system.

Status (October 4, 1989): In July 1989, EPA and Montrose signed a second amendment to the original order, under which Montrose will conduct the FS for the overall site and evaluate options for removing DDT-contaminated sediments in the sanitary sewer lines near the site.

Sampling conducted under the first amended order indicates that ground water is contaminated with high levels of monochlorobenzene 0.25 mile downgradient from the site. Deep wells and additional downgradient wells will be constructed and sampled.

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.