United States Environmental Protection Agency

OLEM/OSRTI
Washington, DC 20460

NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST (NPL)

****NPL Site****

December 2022

HERCULES INC | Hattiesburg, Mississippi
Forrest County

Site Location:

Hercules Inc is located at 613 W. 7th Street in Hattiesburg, Forrest County, Mississippi.

Site History:

The site is a former 200-acre chemical manufacturer that operated from 1923 to 2009. During operations, over 250 chemical products, including paper and textile chemicals, paints, varnishes, pesticides and insecticides (including toxaphene) were produced. After the plant closed in 2009, most of the structures were demolished. Structures that remain include a building used as an office, a former cafeteria, concrete basins, a backfilled surface impoundment from the former wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), sludge disposal pits, a closed landfill, and railroad tracks – some of which are active. Pesticide manufacturing mainly occurred in the central portion of the site. Sludge generated from the WWTP was disposed in the sludge disposal pits. A network of monitoring wells is present at the site for semi-annual groundwater monitoring. Underlying groundwater is contaminated with hazardous substances that were used or produced by the facility.

Site Contamination/Contaminants:

Soils, waste, and groundwater are contaminated with benzene, carbon tetrachloride, chlorobenzene, cyclohexane, 1,4- dioxane, diethyl ether, naphthalene, tetrachloroethylene, trichloroethylene (TCE), toluene, toxaphene, arsenic, chromium, lead, manganese, mercury and nickel. Contaminants are present in on-site soils above EPA Regional Screening Levels (RSL). Groundwater contamination has migrated off-site. Benzene, carbon tetrachloride, chromium, and TCE are present in groundwater above EPA's Safe Drinking Water Act Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs). Soil gas, ambient air, and/or crawl space air at residential properties are contaminated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs), including benzene, carbon tetrachloride, TCE, and vinyl chloride – some of which are above EPA RSLs.

Potential Impacts on Surrounding Community/Environment:

The site is located in a mixed residential, commercial, and industrial area of Hattiesburg. A daycare center is located 1 mile east. The city of Hattiesburg maintains 15 drinking water wells within 4 radial miles. Eight of the 15 wells are within 2 miles of the site. Hercules purchased two residential properties where soil gas and crawl space air samples contained VOCs above EPA RSLs. The city of Hattiesburg is interested in redeveloping portions of the site where monitoring wells contain benzene above the EPA MCL.

Response Activities (to date):

Hercules placed a soil cover and vegetation on the former industrial landfill. The former impoundment basin associated with the WWTP was excavated, filled with clean soil, and vegetated. Hercules purchased two residential properties where VOCs were detected in soil gas and crawl space air.

Need for NPL Listing:

EPA assistance was needed because substantial investigations and long-term cleanup are required. Other federal programs were evaluated but are not viable at this time. The site was referred from the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) program to the Superfund program. The EPA received a letter from the state concurring that this site qualifies for placement on the NPL.

[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 https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp or by telephone at 1-800-CDC-INFO or 1-800-232-4636.