Superfund Construction Project – Funding Pending

Former Custom Cleaners Superfund Site
Memphis, Tennessee

Site Description

The Former Custom Cleaners Site (FCC Site) is located in Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee. The Site is located close to the University of Memphis campus. The properties immediately surrounding the Site are primarily used for residential and commercial purposes. A dry-cleaning business operated on the Site from the mid-1950s to the mid-1990s. Tetrachloroethylene (aka, perchloroethene or PCE) was used as the dry-cleaning solvent. From the early 2000s to February 2014, an art supply store operated at the Site in the former dry-cleaning building. The FCC Site is currently abandoned, and there are no buildings on the property.

In 2013, an initial Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) investigation revealed that PCE was used during the cleaner's tenure at the Site. In 2015, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) supported TDEC's site investigation (SI) sampling activities, which included the collection and analysis of subsurface soil samples, soil gas samples, and groundwater samples. Due to the presence of elevated PCE concentrations in the soil, soil gas, and groundwater, and the proximity of the Site to the Sheahan Well Field, which is a source of drinking water for the City of Memphis, the EPA expanded the subsurface soil sampling and analysis in 2016. The EPA proposed the Site for the National Priorities List (NPL) in 2016, and the Site was finalized on the NPL in August 2017.

Site Status and Cleanup Actions to Date

- In September 2016, the EPA conducted a Removal Action, which included removal of the dry-cleaner building and underlying concrete slab, and excavating and removing approximately 960 cubic yards of PCE-contaminated soil located beneath the former building and concrete slab;
- The EPA split the Site into two Operable Units (OUs); OU1 addresses the Site-related soil contamination, while OU2 addresses the Site-related groundwater contamination;
- The EPA conducted the OU1 remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS) in 2017 and 2018 which focused on fully characterizing the highest levels of PCE remaining in the soil and soil gas after EPA's removal action;
- The EPA signed the OU1 Record of Decision (ROD) in September 2018, which includes In-Situ Thermal Desorption (ISTD) and Soil Vapor Extraction (SVE) as the two treatment technologies to address the PCE contamination in the soil and soil gas;
- In September 2019, the EPA finalized the OU1 Remedial Design (RD);
- The EPA is currently conducting an RI/FS for OU2 to investigate the nature and extend of Site-related groundwater contamination.

Project Pending Funding, as of the end of Fiscal Year 2020

This work includes In-Situ Thermal Desorption (ISTD) and Soil Vapor Extraction (SVE) as the two treatment technologies to address the PCE contamination in the soil and soil gas for OU-1.

Funding Through Fiscal Year 2020

The EPA has provided approximately $2.6 million for cleanup activities at the site.