

## NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST (NPL)

\*\*\*Proposed NPL Site\*\*\*

September 2022

### EAST BASIN ROAD GROUNDWATER | New Castle, Delaware New Castle County

#### **Site Location:**

The East Basin Road Groundwater site consists of co-mingled groundwater plumes affecting an approximately 5,000-acre area located in New Castle, New Castle County, Delaware.

#### **Site History:**

In 1985 contaminants were discovered in public drinking water wells in the New Castle area. In 2013, per- and polyfluoroalkyl compounds (PFAS) were also detected in several public drinking water wells in the area. EPA in coordination with the Delaware Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) has conducted numerous site investigations to identify potential sources of the contamination. Multiple facilities have been identified as known or potential sources including the former and current federal facility owners/tenants of the New Castle County Airport and additional county and privately owned properties and businesses operating within or near the plume area.

#### **Site Contamination/Contaminants:**

The site consists of co-mingled groundwater plumes containing PFAS and volatile organic compounds (VOCs), both of which are commonly used in commercial and industrial operations. PFAS is also used in firefighting foam. The level of VOC contamination has exceeded the state and federal maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) in monitoring and public wells and the PFAS contamination has exceeded the Health Advisory Level (HAL) established by EPA. Surface water, sediments and soils are also contaminated with PFAS, VOCs, heavy metals, and semi-volatile organic compounds.

#### **Potential Impacts on Surrounding Community/Environment:**

The groundwater contamination continues to spread and is now impacting eleven drinking water wells owned and operated by Artesian Water Company and the New Castle Municipal Well Commission. Combined, these two water purveyors provide drinking water to over 215,000 homes and businesses in the New Castle area. Both water companies have installed treatment systems to treat the public drinking water. As a result, all drinking water currently meets state and federal safe drinking water standards. There is also contamination in three waterways and wetland systems in the area which are used for fishing and recreation.

#### **Response Activities (to date):**

The municipal wells are treated to ensure that the drinking water meets the regulatory standards. A soil vapor extraction system was installed on the airport property to address a comingled plume of petroleum hydrocarbons and VOCs.

#### **Need for NPL Listing:**

The state of Delaware referred the site to the EPA to characterize the extent and impact of the groundwater contamination. Other federal and state cleanup programs were evaluated but are not viable at this time due to the extent of the contamination and complexity of the site. The EPA received a letter of support for placing this site on the NPL from the state.

*[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.]*