



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION I

J. F. KENNEDY FEDERAL BUILDING, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02



SDMS DocID

476329

Superfund Records Center

SITE: Eastern Surplus

BREAK: 2.9

OTHER: 476329

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Request for Immediate Removal Action - ACTION MEMORANDUM
Eastern Surplus Company Site, Meddybemps, Maine

FROM: David McIntyre, On-Scene Coordinator
Oil & Hazardous Materials Section

David McIntyre

TO: Michael R. Deland
Regional Administrator

THRU: *DP Conley*
Edward J. Conley, Director
Environmental Services Division

THRU: Merrill Hohman, Director
Waste Management Division *Merrill Hohman*

Authorization is hereby requested for \$300,000 to commence an immediate removal action at the Eastern Surplus Company site in Meddybemps, Maine. Implementation of this action is necessary to prevent, minimize, and mitigate damage to the public health or welfare or the environment which may result from a release or threat of a release of hazardous substances at the site. Such damage includes exposure to hazardous materials, including flammable solids, hazardous liquids and gases, potential contamination of ground water and drinking water wells, and contamination to the Dennys River, a Class A waterway. This removal action, to the extent practicable, would contribute to the efficient performance of any long term remedial action with respect to the release or threatened releases concerned.

The State of Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has requested Federal assistance after trying unsuccessfully to have two potentially responsible parties finance the cleanup, and spending \$370,000 of State funds on a partial cleanup.

Background

The Eastern Surplus Company site is located at the headwaters of the Dennys River in Meddybemps, Maine near the center of town. The site consists of approximately three acres bounded to the north by Meddybemps Lake, to the east by the Dennys River, to the south by Route 191, and to the west by Stone Road. The inactive site is owned by Henry Smith, Jr., who also owns and currently operates an active salvage business about 2 miles west of the site on Route 191.

The DEP received complaints about the site and responded in October, 1985. Upon responding, they found that the property had been used to store various items, including scrap metal, miscellaneous military personnel equipment (e.g., clothing, canteens, helmets), old ammunition (20 mm rounds), junk cars, trucks, busses, and home appliances, 650 to 700 fifty-five gallon drums, 1500 to 2000 compressed gas cylinders of assorted sizes, 140 transformers, hundreds of small (5 to 10 gal.) containers holding a variety of hazardous materials, and miscellaneous debris. These items were strewn all about the site and, from the presence of small trees and brush growing amongst them, had been there for at least 10 to 15 years. Chemical odors were noticeable throughout the area. Contamination from numerous sources had spilled out and was threatening the ground water and the Dennys River. There were no means to prevent the public from entering the property.

Soil samples taken near some of the transformers indicated the presence of PCB's and chlorinated benzene compounds. A check of the drums, many of which were in poor condition and leaking from weathering, revealed the presence of hydrochloric, phosphoric, and sulfuric acids, toluene, trichloroethane, tetrachloroethylene, nitrophenol, calcium carbide, waste PCB oils, and other hazardous materials.

The DEP approached the owner, Henry Smith, Jr., and the Department of Defense (DOD), the generator of an estimated 75% of the material on site, in an attempt to find a responsible party who would pay for the cleanup. Neither of the above would do so (See Enforcement Strategy Section).

The State therefore initiated response actions and ultimately fenced the site, removed approximately 500 drums, all 140 of the transformers, and all known munitions, and undertook minor site maintenance. The total amount spent was \$370,000. At that point, which was the spring of 1986, the DEP considered the site to be stabilized and resumed negotiations with the DOD to complete the cleanup. As of now, this issue is pending.

This site is not on the National Priorities List.

THREAT

The primary threat to public health and the environment is contamination of ground water and surface waters from deteriorating drums and lab pack containers, and from existing contaminated soil. The situation near the site is as follows:

1 residential drinking water well is located within 100 ft. of the site;

1 school (on well water) is within 1000 feet of the site;

20 wells representing 27 dwellings and 103 people are within 1 mile. (Summer population grows to 300.)

Most wastes are stored within 100 feet of the Dennys River, which is a Class A waterway and one of the few rivers in the United States with a wild Atlantic Salmon run.

A secondary threat is one of fire and/or explosion, presented by the calcium carbide which is a water reactive chemical. A fire occurred about 10 years ago at the back of the site as a result of water reacting with exposed calcium carbide. There remains a large quantity of this compound in many of the drums.

The DEP believes that immediate actions are necessary to avert significant contamination from the remaining drums and lab pack containers, which have continued to deteriorate and would certainly not fare well through another winter. Do to the large expenditures from DEP's fund, the DEP requested Federal assistance to take appropriate actions before winter sets in.

ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

See attached Enforcement Strategy.

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Analysis of drums, contaminated soil, and lab pack materials	\$10,000
Disposal of 175 drums	\$35,000

Packaging and disposal of lab pack materials	\$40,000
Excavation and disposal of PCB soils	\$40,000
Disposal of 1500 - 2000 compressed gas cylinders	\$100,000
TAT costs	\$40,000
Intramural costs	\$20,000
Contingencies	\$15,000
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TOTAL	\$300,000

This action shall commence immediately upon authorization. The estimated period of performance is 60 days.

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR RECOMMENDATION

Conditions at the Eastern Surplus Company site meet the NCP Section 300.65 criteria for an immediate removal in that there is:

- ° Potential exposure to hazardous substances ... by nearby populations ... [300.65(b)(2)(i)];
- ° Potential contamination to drinking water supplies or sensitive ecosystems [300.65(b)(2)(ii)];
- ° Hazardous substances ... in drums ... that may pose a threat of release [300.65(b)(2)(iii)];
- ° Weather conditions that may cause hazardous substances ... to migrate or be released [300.65(b)(2)(v)]; and
- ° Threat of fire or explosion [300.65(b)(2)(vi)].

I therefore recommend your approval of this removal request. The estimated total project costs are \$300,000, of which \$280,000 are for extramural cleanup contractor costs. You may indicate approval or disapproval by signing below.

Approve: Paul Keogh Date: 11-17-86

Disapprove: _____ Date: _____