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**PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY  
OLD SPRINGFIELD LANDFILL SITE  
SPRINGFIELD, VERMONT**

**SPRINGFIELD TOWN HALL  
MARCH 29, 1988  
7:00-9:45 P.M.**

OLD SPRINGFIELD LANDFILL  
ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD

On March 29, 1988, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) held a meeting to discuss the results of a Supplemental Remedial Investigation and Endangerment Assessment conducted at the Old Springfield Landfill Superfund site in Springfield, Vermont. Approximately 70 people attended the meeting, including several members of the local media. The panel of speakers for the meeting consisted of Paula Fitzsimmons, EPA Remedial Project Manager for the site; Jack Frost of ICF/SRW, contractor to EPA at the site; and Marilyn Disirio of the Agency of Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). Also present and available to answer questions from the public were David Webster, EPA Maine and Vermont Superfund Section Chief; Mike Kenyon, EPA legal counsel; John Malter of the Vermont Agency of Environmental Conservation; and Ken Barnister of the Vermont Department of Public Health. The meeting included a one-hour presentation by EPA, a 20 minute presentation by ATSDR and a one and one-half hour question and answer period. The agenda and fact sheet EPA distributed at the meeting are attached as appendices to this document.

**SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS**

Paula Fitzsimmons introduced the speakers and outlined the agenda for the meeting. She announced that the site information hotline had been repaired and encouraged residents to call for updates on site activities and to ask questions of EPA.

Jack Frost then described EPA's recent Supplemental Remedial Investigation (RI) of contamination at the Old Springfield Landfill site and presented the major findings of the investigation. According to Mr. Frost, the Supplemental RI revealed the presence of contamination in soil, ground water, and sediments concentrated within four former waste disposal areas on the site. The results of the study also indicated that contaminants have saturated site soils in the waste areas and are moving to the north beneath the site. Contaminants are moving vertically deeper into the site and migrating into the ground water, which surfaces in seeps down the sides of the hill beneath the former landfill.

Mr. Frost then described a follow-up study underway at the site to determine the source of contamination on the western side of the site. He concluded by explaining that the Feasibility Study (FS) currently is being conducted to identify and evaluate cleanup alternatives for the Old Springfield Landfill site.

Marilyn Disirio of ATSDR presented a brief overview of the purpose, process, and limitations of conducting risk and endangerment assessments

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permanent relocation will be considered as components of potential remedies for the site. Any relocation effort, temporary or permanent, will be coordinated between EPA and FEMA.

- Comment:** Many residents expressed concern over the fact that representatives of the potentially responsible parties (PRPs) at the site met with Springfield Mobile Estates residents and offered to buy their homes out. Residents wanted to know if those who had agreed to sell their homes had made a mistake since EPA is not yet absolutely sure that relocation will be necessary.
- Response:** EPA replied that although EPA understands that the residents need to know as soon as possible whether they will have to relocate, the Agency's policy is to wait until all remedial alternatives have been evaluated in the FS. EPA believes that it would be a greater disservice to residents if EPA were to announce whether relocation would be necessary prior to completion of the FS evaluation of remedial alternatives suitable for the site. EPA suggested that the PRPs may have chosen to offer to buy residents homes after considering the fact that many of the cleanup options available for use at the site would require either temporary or permanent relocation.
- Comment:** Residents accused the PRPs of using "scare tactics" in offering to buy them out prior to the meeting with EPA. Residents asked if EPA knew about the PRP meeting and, if so, why EPA's informational meeting had not been held before the PRP meeting.
- Response:** EPA explained that EPA scheduled their meeting several weeks before the PRP meeting was announced. EPA noted that the PRPs informed EPA of the PRP meeting the day before the PRP meeting, even though the PRPs were under no legal requirement to notify EPA.
- Comment:** A resident asked whether the PRPs could attempt to reach an agreement with EPA whereby EPA would set a lower standard for site cleanup if residents were moved off the site than would be required if people were living on the site.
- Response:** EPA said that PRPs have no special influence over EPA's choice of cleanup levels or a remedy for site contamination. EPA added that the PRP comments would be considered with other public comments during the public comment period on the FS and Proposed Plan.

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2. Potential Health Risks Posed by the Site

- Comment:** Residents of the Springfield Mobile Estates asked if it is safe for them to remain on the site, since EPA has said that because of risks posed by the site residents may need to be relocated in the future.
- Response:** EPA replied that there is no imminent threat to public health that would require relocation of residents in the very near future. However, in evaluating the need for relocation of residents in the future, EPA is examining risks from the site over a long period of time, as well as risks that may be posed by the cleanup operation.
- Comment:** Residents asked EPA for more detail on the potential health risks posed by the site, and to define low versus high levels of risk.
- Response:** EPA explained that there is no imminent threat to human health from exposure to contaminants at the site. EPA said that the highest risk from site contamination is from possible inhalation of air emissions from contaminated seeps on the slopes descending from the former landfill. EPA noted, however, that because the seeps are in areas that are fenced or not easily accessible, residents are not likely to be exposed to contamination from the seeps in the short-term. EPA said that its Endangerment Assessment for the site measured the risk level presented by the site as potentially causing one extra case of cancer in 100,000 people who have been exposed to site contaminants over a 70-year lifetime. EPA has established that the maximum risk presented by the site (if, for instance, individuals were continually outdoors near a seep emitting contaminants into the air) is measured as a potential increase of one cancer case in 1,000 people. In general, EPA defines an acceptable or safe level of risk as falling between one extra cancer incidence in 10,000 people and one extra cancer incidence in one million people.
- Comment:** A resident asked if any one segment of the population was more at risk from site contaminants than another.
- Response:** EPA replied that the risk posed by the site depends on the contaminated media, i.e. the soil, ground water, or air. Generally, children are most at risk for exposure to contaminated soil. EPA announced that the Endangerment Assessment that evaluates the potential risks posed by the site to human health and the environment will be released in two weeks.

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**Comment:** A resident said that seven or eight residents in the vicinity of the site have died of cancer and other diseases and asked why EPA has not taken medical histories of the residents.

**Response:** EPA replied that a health assessment is being conducted to determine whether a full health study is warranted.

**Comment:** A resident asked if EPA noted any trend toward lower levels of contamination between the 1984 RI and the most recent RI.

**Response:** EPA responded that because the two studies involved different sampling points and objectives, EPA cannot draw any conclusion about changes in contamination levels.

### 3. Remedial Alternatives Under Consideration for the Site

**Comment:** Residents asked EPA to review the range of possible cleanup options for the site.

**Response:** EPA offered the following examples of remedial technologies that the Agency considers for Superfund sites with contamination similar to that found at the Old Springfield Landfill site: contaminated air can be treated by venting the landfill and treating or allowing dilution of contaminants; soil treatments include incineration of contaminated soil, or excavation of soil and transport to an off-site EPA-approved landfill; sediment can be treated with chemicals or heat; and contaminated ground water can be collected at the seeps, treated, and returned to the site. EPA explained that as part of the FS, the Agency will evaluate remedial alternatives for the site according to the nine criteria established by Congress. These criteria include protection of health and the environment, compliance with Federal and State regulations and requirements, cost effectiveness, and effectiveness in permanently reducing contamination at the site.

**Comment:** A resident asked how long it would take to clean up the ground water at the site.

**Response:** EPA replied that the optimum target time for groundwater cleanup is five years, but that at sites where risk is low and ground water is left untreated to clean itself by attenuation of contaminants over time, remediation can take up to 50 years or more.

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- Comment:** A resident asked if the site will be monitored between the signing of a Record of Decision (ROD) for the site and the beginning of a cleanup.
- Response:** EPA replied that the need for monitoring will depend on the cleanup technology chosen for the site.
- Comment:** A resident asked if EPA could choose the no action alternative and, if EPA did, would that mean that the site was safe for children to play on.
- Response:** EPA said that the Agency would select the no action alternative only if taking no action would be fully protective of public health. EPA noted that the no action alternative is considered by law primarily to provide a baseline for comparison with alternatives that involve treatment of the contamination.
- Comment:** A resident asked whether the same company that has done the investigation also will conduct the cleanup.
- Response:** EPA answered that the choice of contractor support will be made later, and that if the PRPs agree to conduct the cleanup, the PRP contractor will have to meet EPA standards.

#### 4. Timetable for Future EPA Activities at the Site

- Comment:** Several residents wanted to know when EPA will choose a remedy, how long negotiations with PRPs will take, and how long the cleanup will take.
- Response:** EPA said that the FS alternatives and EPA's Proposed Plan will be released during the summer for public review and a 30-day public comment period before EPA chooses a remedy for the site. The ROD, describing EPA's remedy for the site will be signed in September. After the ROD is signed, negotiations between PRPs and EPA will be limited to four months, as required under the Superfund law. The timetable for cleanup will depend on the remedial alternative chosen.
- Comment:** Residents expressed concern that the EPA personnel currently assigned to the site will change, causing delays in the cleanup.
- Response:** EPA responded that the current Remedial Project Manager has already been working on the site longer than any previous site manager and expects to remain in the position at least through

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the signing of a ROD for the site. EPA added that there is no statutory guarantee that schedules will not change; however, Congress has established that RODs should be signed at 175 sites nationwide by October 1988 and the Old Springfield Landfill site is expected to be one of those sites.

5. Cost of EPA Activities at the Site

**Comment:** Several residents wanted to know how the cleanup will be paid for.

**Response:** EPA responded that the three ways a remedial action can be paid for under the Superfund law are:

- 1) The PRPs and EPA can negotiate an agreement for the PRPs to perform the cleanup with EPA oversight.
- 2) EPA can use Superfund money collected from taxes on the chemical and oil industries and try to recover the costs from the PRPs through the courts if necessary; or
- 3) The State and EPA can enter into a cooperative agreement for the State to undertake the remedy.

**Comment:** Residents wanted to know the cost to date of EPA studies at the Old Springfield Landfill site and what future cleanup costs might be. A resident expressed anger at the cost of the initial Remedial Investigation at the site, saying that the results of that study were inadequate and a waste of taxpayers' money.

**Response:** EPA reported that of the one million dollars budgeted for the current RI/FS, \$883,000 has been spent and the budget is expected to cover EPA activities through signing of a ROD at the site. The first RI in 1984-85 cost \$875,000. Although the cost of cleanup will depend on the remedy chosen, the average cleanup cost at Superfund sites nationwide is \$20 million, and the average cost for sites in New England is between \$5 and \$10 million.

EPA said that the data from the initial investigation have been used by EPA as a building block for the subsequent EPA study and as part of the data pool for the Endangerment Assessment. EPA noted that the initial RI was conducted during the earliest phase of implementing the Superfund program and effort had to be expended to determine what to look for at a Superfund site.

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### 7. Public Involvement

- Comment:** A resident asked why EPA has not issued any information on the site since sampling activities at the site were completed over six months ago.
- Response:** EPA replied that the Agency waits until sampling data have been validated and analyzed before releasing findings to the public in the RI report and fact sheet. EPA does not release information unless it is confident that the findings are accurate.
- Comment:** Several residents expressed displeasure that the RI report was not available to the public prior to the meeting.
- Response:** EPA apologized and explained that when the meeting date was confirmed, EPA had expected to have completed the final RI report. EPA said that if, after reading the RI report, citizens had questions, EPA would answer the questions individually or return for another meeting.

### EPA COMMITMENTS FOR FUTURE ACTIVITIES

In responding to citizens' questions and concerns at the March 29, 1988 meeting, EPA committed to releasing the RI and Endangerment Assessment reports by mid-April, and committed to return to Springfield to hold another meeting on the RI and Endangerment Assessment if citizens requested an additional public meeting.

EPA announced that a public meeting to present the findings of the FS and EPA's Proposed Plan is planned for June 1988. The exact date, time, and location in Springfield for the meeting will be announced in the local newspapers and through a mailing to residents and interested parties on EPA's site mailing list.

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