

News Releases from Region 1

Wilmington Mass. Olin Chemical Site Added to National Superfund List

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(Boston, Mass. - Apr. 18, 2006) – Wilmington's **Olin Chemical** Site is one of six sites nationwide being formally added to the Superfund National Priorities List (NPL) by EPA.

The NPL is EPA's list of the country's most serious hazardous waste sites, identified by the federal government for possible long term cleanup. Today's completion of the NPL listing process ensures that a rigorous investigation of all environmental issues surrounding the site will be performed.

"The **Olin Chemical** listing is a positive milestone in the cleanup of the site and is good news for the south Wilmington and north Woburn communities," said Robert W. Varney, regional administrator for EPA's New England office. "EPA is deeply concerned with the damage caused to the Town of Wilmington's primary drinking water aquifer. Designation of the **Olin Chemical** property as a Superfund site provides us with the technical, financial and legal tools needed to work closely with state and local stakeholders to ensure a complete and thorough investigation of the site, and a successful implementation of any cleanup plan that follows."

The **Olin Chemical** Site was referred to the EPA Superfund program by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in late 2004. EPA proposed the **Olin Chemical** Site for inclusion on the Superfund list on Sept. 14, 2005, triggering a public comment and review period.

The 53-acre Wilmington property is one of six sites across the country being added to the NPL, and is the only site in New England to be added. Sites are proposed or added to the NPL as part of EPA's periodic review of the Superfund program. EPA identifies and evaluates potential Superfund NPL sites according to threats to nearby populations through actual or potential contamination of soils, groundwater, surface water or air.

With today's listing, there are now 115 Superfund sites on the NPL in New England, including 36 in Massachusetts. Across the nation, there are now 1,244 active sites on the NPL.

The former **Olin Chemical** plant was used for **chemical** manufacturing beginning in 1953 by a series of companies, and was ultimately purchased by the **Olin** Corporation in 1980. The plant produced **chemical** blowing agents, stabilizers, antioxidants and other specialty **chemical** products for the rubber and plastics industry. **Olin** closed the plant in 1986.

Wastewater disposal and general handling of **chemicals** and waste products at the plant led to significant environmental contamination. Principal contaminants of concern include ammonia, sodium, chromium and NDMA (N-nitrosodimethylamine). Groundwater contamination associated with releases from the site stretches in a plume extending about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile west from the **Olin Chemical** property, and has forced closure of five municipal water supply wells which served more than 7,000 people.

For many years, the **Olin** Corporation worked with the Mass. Dept. of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) to investigate and clean up the site under the Massachusetts hazardous waste program. Recently, **Olin** and the MassDEP disagreed over the approach for remediation of contaminated groundwater, which led MassDEP to

refer the site to EPA's Superfund program.

The Superfund program operates under an *enforcement first* approach aimed at requiring parties who are legally responsible for the contamination to pay for and carry out any necessary investigations and cleanups under the oversight of EPA and state environmental agencies, without the use of federal tax dollars.

More information on the **Olin Chemical** site: <http://www.epa.gov/region1/superfund/sites/olin>

More information on all six sites added to the NPL, including **Olin Chemical**:
<http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/newnpl.htm>

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