

NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST (NPL)

Final Site

May 2013

CREESE & COOK TANNERY (FORMER) | Danvers, Massachusetts
Essex County **Site Location:**

The former Creese & Cook Tannery property is comprised of three parcels and a portion of a fourth parcel totaling approximately 17 acres of land situated along opposite banks of the Crane River in Danvers, Massachusetts. The large parcel on the western bank of the river (55 Clinton Avenue) is where a majority of the tanning operations took place. The site is located in a mixed commercial/residential area bounded to the west by a movie theater, shopping center and residences; to the north by Mass. Route I-128 and residences; and to the south and east by residential and commercial properties.

 **Site History:**

The four parcels were at one time owned by the Creese & Cook Co. and were utilized as a leather tanning and finishing operation until the 1980s when the company went bankrupt. Tanning and finishing first began at the 33 Water Street parcel on the east side of the Crane River. Operations moved in 1914 to the new, larger 55 Clinton Avenue parcel. Creese & Cook Co. took raw animal hides and produced shoe, handbag, glove and garment leather primarily from cowhide stock. Wastes from the manufacturing process were disposed of in two onsite landfills. Liquid effluent was discharged to the Crane River and later to sewers, while sludge waste was deposited in an onsite lagoon system. Leather tanning and finishing operations ceased in 1983. The former Creese & Cook Tannery property was later subdivided and the 33 Water Street parcel was redeveloped into a condominium complex.

 **Site Contamination/Contaminants:**

Concentrations of arsenic, total chromium, hexavalent chromium and/or dioxin, the primary site contaminants, exceed health-based standards in multiple locations.

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

Surface and subsurface soils on the developed parcel at 33 Water Street and on the other three parcels located on both sides of the river are contaminated with tannery wastes. Leather hides and related contaminants are also documented in the banks of the Crane River and in river sediments. These tannery waste materials have contaminated a recreational fishery and more than a mile of wetland frontage. Residents of the developed 33 Water Street parcel are threatened by wastes associated with the former tannery.

 **Response Activities (to date):**

Over the past 20+ years, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) has overseen PRP-lead investigation and response actions, including fencing and construction of a waste disposal cell, at the 55 Clinton Avenue parcel. However, MassDEP has requested the EPA's assistance and an EPA removal action to address arsenic in soils behind one of the condominium buildings is complete.

 **Need for NPL Listing:**

A letter was received from the state of Massachusetts supporting NPL listing. Other federal and state cleanup programs were evaluated, but are not viable at this time.

[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.]

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp> or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.