

**NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST (NPL)**

\*\*\*Final Site\*\*\*

September 2009

**PAPELERA PUERTORRIQUENA, INC. | Utuado, Puerto Rico**** Site Location:**

Papelera Puertorriquena, Inc. (PPI) is located at RD 111 KM 1.8, Vivi Abajo Ward, Utuado, Puerto Rico. The facility is located on a steep embankment within 40 feet of the Vivi River.

** Site History:**

PPI has operated at this location since 1965. PPI is an active facility that manufactures paper bags (coffee bags, bags for bakery products, rice bags, supermarket bags), cardboard boxes (pizza boxes), and plastic bags (supermarket bags) in different sizes and dimensions. Other paper-based products (greetings cards and paper gift wraps) are stored on site and distributed by PPI. Inks and solvents are used in the manufacturing process.

** Site Contamination/Contaminants:**

The primary contaminants are volatile organic compounds including trichloroethylene (TCE) and tetrachloroethylene (PCE). These contaminants have been detected in a discharge from the facility to the Vivi River and in on-site soil. The contaminants have been found in sediment and in water samples, indicating an ongoing release.

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

Since 1984, unauthorized air emissions and discharges of wastewater have led to various criminal and environmental investigations and visual inspections at PPI by state and local agencies. On March 28, 1984, a visual inspection at PPI by the Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board (PREQB) followed a spill from PPI that resulted in discharge of liquids containing inks and oil residues into the Vivi River. In March 1998, the PPI facility discharged wastewater containing benzene, toluene, tetrachloroethene, ethyl benzene, and trichloroethene to the Vivi River, causing a fish kill and evacuation of 11 nearby residents. During a follow-up visual inspection by the PREQB and the Puerto Rico Fire Department, a continuous flow of wastewaters from the facility into the Vivi River was observed.

The Vivi River flows one mile to the Rio Grande de Arecibo. The Rio Grande de Arecibo flows into Dos Bocas Lake, which is a reservoir and a fishery.

A wing of the building where PPI operates houses a college with over 500 students and the offices of the Puerto Rico Department of Labor.

** Response Activities (to date):**

Since EPA's involvement at the site began, numerous drums and containers have been removed from the site and properly disposed.

** Need for NPL Listing:**

The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico does not have a program equivalent to Superfund to provide the resources necessary to respond to a long term environmental response. EPA received a letter of support for placing this site on the NPL from the Commonwealth.

*[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.]*

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/toxfaq.html> or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.