

**NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST (NPL)**

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

September 2014

**PIERSON'S CREEK** | Newark, New Jersey  
Essex County **Site Location:**

The Pierson's Creek site is located in an industrial area of Newark, New Jersey. Pierson's Creek discharges to Newark Bay, approximately 1.5 miles downstream.

 **Site History:**

An active chemical facility that currently manufactures antimicrobial and antifungal paint additives and related products is located just upstream of Pierson's Creek. Prior to the facility's chemical manufacturing operation, which began in 1956, the facility had been occupied by other industrial operators since the late 1800s. In addition, there had been other industries along Pierson's Creek, which may have affected the sediments in Pierson's Creek. Mercury compounds were manufactured at the facility from 1957 until 1987. From 1965 to 1976, the mercury wastewater was treated on-site with sulfide precipitation prior to discharge to the creek. In 1976, an on-site wastewater treatment plant was installed that discharges to the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission Waste Water Treatment Plant.

In addition to the discharge of mercury-contaminated wastewater, there is a history of spills and discharges to the ground surface characterized by puddles of chemicals on the ground; mercury droplets on the ground and in runoff reaching Pierson's Creek.

 **Site Contamination/Contaminants:**

The primary contaminant of concern is mercury, which was discharged directly to Pierson's Creek. In addition to mercury, creek sediments contain elevated levels of arsenic, cadmium, chromium, lead, nickel, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), pesticides, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

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

Contamination is affecting the wetlands along Pierson's Creek. Newark Bay is part of the New York-New Jersey (NY-NJ) Harbor Estuary, a sensitive area identified under the National Estuary Program. Despite advisories and restrictions, people in the area continue to eat fish caught in the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary, including Newark Bay. The historical and on-going mercury contamination is likely at least partially attributable to sediment discharges from Pierson's Creek.

 **Response Activities (to date):**

The site has been the focus of numerous investigations since the 1970s, but interim remedial actions to date have not addressed mercury contamination downstream.

 **Need for NPL Listing:**

Other federal and state cleanup programs were evaluated, but are not viable at this time. The EPA received a letter of support for placing this site on the NPL from the state of New Jersey.

*[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.