

NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST (NPL)

Final Site

May 2014

UNIMATIC MANUFACTURING CORPORATION | **Fairfield, New Jersey**
*Essex County*** Site Location:**

The Unimatic Manufacturing Corporation facility is a former aluminum die-casting facility located at 25 Sherwood Lane in Fairfield, Essex County, New Jersey. The 1.23-acre subject property is immediately surrounded by industrial properties, including the Caldwell Trucking Superfund site to the southeast, that are located near commercial areas and residential neighborhoods.

 Site History:

Unimatic operated at the facility from 1955 until 2001, primarily as an aluminum die-casting facility. Beginning with the last facility expansion in 1970, large volumes of lubricating oil were sprayed on die-casting machines throughout the shop area, covering the walls and floor. Unimatic washed out the PCB-laden lubricant through floor trenches into the facility wastewater pipes, which discharged to a tributary of Deepavaal Brook. The facility discharged 16,000 to 44,000 gallons per day of contaminated water through the wastewater pipes which leaked on to the ground at the site, contaminating soil and ground water throughout the property and beyond the property boundaries.

 Site Contamination/Contaminants:

Until 1979, wastewater containing PCBs leaked through the pipes, contaminating soil and ground water throughout the property and beyond the property boundaries. The building is also contaminated with PCBs. The well water that was used at the site until 1989 contained high levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which are believed to have migrated from the Caldwell Trucking Superfund site. Wastewater discharged from the Unimatic facility was found to contain high levels of VOCs in the 1980s. The wastewater also contained petroleum hydrocarbons and oil, and is believed to have contained PCBs. Soil at the discharge point is contaminated with PCBs, but the extent of contamination is unknown.

 Potential Impacts on Surrounding Community/Environment:

The former Unimatic building is severely contaminated with PCBs, which have entered indoor air. The Unimatic operation resulted in contaminated soil, ground water and surface water due to decades of wastewater discharge through leaky pipes. The nearest drinking water wells are located less than one-half mile downgradient of the site, and ground water wells within 4 miles of the site provide drinking water to more than 20,000 people. The well water used at the site until 1989 contained high levels of VOCs, and the effluent to the unnamed tributary to Deepavaal Brook was shown to contain petroleum hydrocarbons, oil and high levels of VOCs in the 1980s. Deepavaal Brook flows into the Passaic River and there is a drinking water intake that serves more than 450,000 people located 2.2 miles downstream of Deepavaal Brook.

 Response Activities (to date):

Under National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit No. NJ0031003, the EPA and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) issued numerous non-compliance and violation notices beginning in 1982; however, Unimatic continued to discharge 16,000 to 44,000 gallons per day to state waters until the facility connected to municipal water in 1989. Numerous investigations under NJDEP and oversight by the EPA since 2001 have shown that the building, soils and ground water on site are severely contaminated with PCBs. Unimatic has excavated some contaminated soils, but high PCB concentrations remain in soil and ground water on and beyond the property. The EPA is performing interim protective measures inside the building, which will be vacated and sealed.

 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.